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# Community Pressures and Their Implications for the Leadership Role of Certain School Superintendents in Lake County, Illinois

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COMMUNITY PRESSURES AND THEIR IMPLICATIONS FOR THE  
LEADERSHIP ROLE OF CERTAIN SUPERINTENDENTS  
IN LAKE COUNTY, ILLINOIS

By

Oscar Thomas Bedrosian

A Dissertation Submitted to the Faculty of the Graduate School  
of Loyola University in Partial Fulfillment of  
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Doctor of Education

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## LIFE

Oscar T. Bedrosian was born in Waukegan, Illinois, November 25, 1930.

He was graduated from Waukegan Township High School, Waukegan, Illinois, in June, 1948. He received the Bachelor of Science degree in Education from Drake University in June, 1952; the degree of Master of Science in Education was awarded in May, 1953 from the same institution.

The author taught at Beach Park School, District No. 3, Waukegan, Illinois from 1955 to 1958. He was appointed the principal of South Park Elementary School, Deerfield, Illinois in 1959. From 1962 to 1970 he was the principal of Wilmot Junior High School. Presently he is the Assistant Superintendent for Instruction in School District No. 110, Deerfield, Illinois.

The author has contributed to an article, "Development of Positive Self-Image in Elementary School Children," Elementary Guidance and Counseling Journal (December, 1970) and also, "Team Teaching Strategies" Project Capital, Springfield, Illinois (February, 1972).



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## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

During the past decade there has been increasing community pressure directed toward public schools. It has been a period characterized by accelerated lay citizen involvement in the financial problems faced by boards of education throughout the land. Many authorities in the field agree that increasing community pressure directed toward the public schools is potentially a highly desirable development. Those same authorities suggest, however, that this involvement must be constructive in nature or it will lower staff morale with a subsequent reduction in the effectiveness of the instructional program. Any community pressure, therefore, will present a challenge for school superintendents to assert dynamic leadership behavior.

Edgar L. Morphet, Roe L. Johns, and Theodore L. Reller indicate in their book Educational Administration, Concepts, Practices, and Issues, in Chapter VI:

Despite the occasional but highly publicized struggle regarding schools, most communities and schools are interacting in a reasonably desirable manner. However, the people of the community may in many cases believe in more adequate educational provisions than are usually found. The machinery for getting things done either operates exceedingly slowly or fails to achieve

part of that which is desired. As a result there is much concern regarding the schools and the educational program.<sup>1</sup>

Morphet and associates continue on to say that the public concern pertains to many aspects of the school system. Among these aspects are:

1. Educational objectives
2. Identification of students who should be taught
3. Selection of subjects
4. Methods used to teach
5. Quality of teachers
6. Financing of education
7. Control of education<sup>2</sup>

Rapid changes have characterized our society during the past few decades. The social order surrounding the schools is casting its reverberating problems - unemployment, poverty, delinquency, and the changing family structure on those same schools. Also economic and industrial advances have had a great impact upon community life. In conjunction with these above variables, the accelerated mobility of our population has resulted in a lessening of community unity. The rapid change in our community structure has fostered communication problems

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<sup>1</sup>Edgar L. Morphet, Roe L. Johns, and Theodore L. Reller, Educational Administration, Concepts, Practices, and Issues (Englewood Cliffs, N. J.: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1961), p. 127.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 128.

between the "establishment" and the new power groups. These factors have produced insecurity and tensions which have not helped in the understanding and acceptance of community agencies such as the schools.

Floyd Hunter postulates in his book, Community Power Structure, A Study of Decision Makers, that educators should be aware of facts such as the following regarding the community:

1. Most communities are characterized by large power organizations.
2. Many of these power organizations have been consciously created and have a definite purpose.
3. Many organizations are nationally oriented.
4. Individuals are frequently associated with organizations that have contradictory purposes.

Hunter further stresses that the term "power" is not used in the sense that it is something undesirable. Rather, "Power is a word that is used to describe the acts of man going about the business of moving other men to act in relation to themselves or in relation to organic or inorganic things."<sup>3</sup>

Superintendents must be sensitive to the community power structure and to direct its energy toward constructive support of the schools. The process of communication is a vital element that must be established with community groups if the schools are to receive optimum benefit from their membership.

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<sup>3</sup>Floyd Hunter, Community Power Structure, A Study of Decision Makers (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1953), p. 2.

The public relations platform of the schools should stress the danger that could exist when the public is not kept informed of the activities and programs of the schools. The efficacy of school-community relations rests in utilizing the time, talents, and resources of community groups for the betterment of education. It is, therefore, critical to a positive influence of these groups on the schools that an atmosphere of constructive dialogue permeate superintendents' dealings with community groups.

Arthur B. Moehlman and James A. von Zwall emphasize in their book, School Public Relations, the importance of the school's role in creating a climate which allows a constructive interaction between members of the school and community.<sup>4</sup>

Moehlman and von Zwall further postulate that identification of pressure groups as enemies of the school is a grave danger and often an unwarranted generalization.<sup>5</sup> Even though some of those who are critical of the public school system have also announced themselves as enemies of public education there is no point in waging public battle with them. Also prominent educators such as Roald F. Campbell and Luvern L. Cunningham<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>4</sup>Arthur B. Moehlman and James A. von Zwall, School Public Relations (New York: Appleton-Century-Craft, Inc., 1957), p. 118.

<sup>5</sup>Ibid., p. 127.

<sup>6</sup>Roald F. Campbell, Luvern L. Cunningham, Roderick F. McPhee and Raphael O. Nystrand, The Organization and Control of American Schools, Second Edition (Columbus, Ohio: Charles E. Merrill Publishing Company, Inc., 1970), p. 342.

are in concert with the thinking of Moehlman and von Zwall on the above issue. They agree it is more important that community pressure group criticism be appraised and considered, regardless of source, to remedy an education situation which ought not exist or to improve the image of the schools so they will not fall prey to biased critics of special interest groups.

As a public official, the superintendent of schools is a prominent symbol to the people. In a democracy, tradition and custom call for personal contact between the people and their officials, whether to secure favors, present grievances, or to offer advice.<sup>7</sup> Consequently, the superintendent should make himself available to the public as the chief spokesman of the board of education in matters related to the educational program of the community. As an educational leader in the community the superintendent must decide on the validity and implications of pressures exerted by community groups.

Accordingly to Eye and Netzer, sociological or political analysis of the structure of power in the community is not a matter of mere academic interest anymore; rather, it is a matter of application of knowledge to specific situations in the process of decision-making.<sup>8</sup> Griffiths clearly points out that power not exercised is power lost to others who actually make

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<sup>7</sup>Ibid., p. 254.

<sup>8</sup>Glen G. Eye and Lanore A. Netzer, School Administrators and Instruction (Boston: Allyn and Bacon, Inc., 1969), pp. 103-109.

decisions.<sup>9</sup> This theory explains why individuals and groups often struggle for opportunities to capture the decision-making prerogatives of any organized group. School officials must recognize that the public has a major interest in the schools, namely, that their children receive the best of what the schools have to offer at a level of financial consideration which will not overly accelerate costs to the taxpayer. The public may react either in an informal or formal manner in pursuing this interest. Therefore, school administrators must become sensitive to these interests and their implications on the schools. The present day superintendent must, therefore, utilize his power position to effect a positive linkage between the school and community.

Arthur B. Moehlman and James A. von Zwall emphasize in their book, School Public Relations, the importance of the school's role in creating a climate which allows a constructive interaction between members of the school and community.<sup>10</sup>

It is also evident from the literature that school-community cooperation is paramount to the establishment of quality educational programs. If the superintendent, as the chief officer of the board of education, is to maintain his

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<sup>9</sup>Daniel E. Griffiths, Administration as Decision Making, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1958), p. 32.

<sup>10</sup>Moehlman and von Zwall, op. cit., p. 130.

professional image as the educational leader of the community, time and energy must be expended in channeling the influence of community pressure groups.

The "Zeigarnik effect" may also be a factor to consider.<sup>11</sup> It may be explained as a compulsion inherent in some persons or groups to complete a task or to achieve a given result; it is sometimes called a "compulsion to close." This effect is named after B. Zeigarnik, a psychologist who conducted experiments on the influence of finished or unfinished tasks on the behavior of individuals. (It is one of the rare psychological terms that bears the name of a person.)

The interpretation of Zeigarnik's research findings suggests the importance it can have for superintendents in interpreting the behavior of people in a group. Some individuals who appear to be hard-working, always busy at their given tasks, may not be getting the desired results from their efforts; they are activities-oriented rather than results-oriented. Groups with a high "Zeigarnik" can be of considerable success in their influence on the schools. An understanding of this effect by superintendents can be a motivational factor in utilizing the talents of community pressure groups. Each public school district in the United States must look to its immediate public for support, and to its school board, the representatives of

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<sup>11</sup>John F. Mee, "The Zeigarnik Effect," Business Horizons, XXV, No. 4 (June, 1969), p. 53.



the public, for policy. To stimulate that support and encourage sound policy, the district has a legal and moral obligation to work constructively with all community groups which may exert an influence on the schools.

The simple fact is that an American public school district is so dependent upon its public for support, financial and otherwise, that it commits educational suicide when it neglects the power structure and isolates itself from the community. If school officials are to maximize support from these community groups, their public relations programs must be dedicated to informing the general public and the specific constituent publics about the schools and their educational programs.

Further information of importance to the schools is the community's attitudes and values. The composition of these two variables plays an intrinsic role in the community's percepts of the schools. It is therefore essential that superintendents develop strategy which will elicit community feelings about the management and operation of public institutions. Effective public relations programs both inform and obtain information from the community.

#### Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to determine through comparison and analysis the implications that community pressure

groups can and do have on the leadership role of superintendents. Specifically, this dissertation will examine community pressures as they affect the following selected areas of school operation: (1) instructional program, (2) school personnel, (3) fiscal support, and (4) the leadership style of the superintendent.

Volumes of literature and research have been produced which deal directly with the historical development and present status of community groups. The literature is limited, however, on the superintendent's perception of these groups and their influence on his role.

Data collected will also be analyzed for extracting the implications of community pressures on the superintendent's leadership role in terms of his reactions to community pressures to introduce changes in the school, to participate in the decision making processes on school issues, and to influence the formulation of school board policies.

#### Methods and Procedure

This study is based on seven hypotheses derived from an analysis of current professional literature and the opinions of practicing school administrators in the Northern Illinois area:

- I. The Superintendent is influenced positively by community pressure groups in the development and implementation of the instructional program.

- II. The Superintendent's perception of organized community pressure groups is a positive influence on his financial administration of the school district.
- III. The Superintendent is influenced positively by community pressure groups in the development and implementation of personnel policies in the school district.
- IV. The Superintendent perceives organized community pressure groups as having a positive influence on the rate and direction of change in the entire operation of the school district.
- V. The Superintendent perceives organized pressure groups to be of positive influence on his leadership role.
- VI. The Superintendent's participative attitude allows for positive action of community pressure groups.
- VII. The Superintendent's leadership effectiveness is positively influenced by his adherence to basic school board policies in his interaction with organized community pressure groups.

A list of fifty items descriptive of a wide-range of groups and events that could influence administrators was sent to a representative sample of school officials and doctoral students at Loyola University. The list was compiled from news items and articles from current issues of educational journals. (See Appendix A.) The respondents were asked to identify those items which they considered most important in affecting their leadership role. Of the fifty surveys sent to administrators and doctoral students, forty were returned and in twenty-five, or 62.5 percent of those cases, the respondents indicated that formal community pressure groups have influence on their

leadership role. A review of the literature verified that formal organizations do exert an influence on the schools. The survey findings assisted in the development of propositions to test the hypotheses. (See Appendix B) Also, a review of the related research and literature was made to help in the formulation of the questionnaire. The hypotheses and questions were tested by fellow doctoral students at Loyola University and administrators from the Deerfield-Highland Park school systems. Field tests were instituted and revisions made accordingly.

The interview method used for this study was designed to test the seven hypotheses of this dissertation and, therefore, was conducted with a structured purpose. Each respondent was asked specific questions, the responses to which were weighted to place him in a general category of reactions. The propositions fall into seven categories, each related to the primary purpose of the study which attempts to determine the influence community pressure groups have on the role of the superintendent.

Twenty-two superintendents were asked to participate in the study. The selection of these educators was taken from a random sample of school superintendents in Lake County, Illinois. There are fifty-four superintendents in this county. One out of every three of the initial thirty were selected and then every other one of the last twenty-four were identified, making for a total of twenty-two respondents in the sample.

The selection of Lake County was twofold in purpose. (1) This county is a typical cross-section of a middle-class area of Northern Illinois, encompassing a variety of communities and school districts. Assessed valuation of public school districts in Lake County, Illinois, range from a high of \$96,500 to a low of \$12,400 per child. The schools in this county have experienced rapid growth over the past decade. Enrollments range from a high of 20,000 students to a low of 300. The rapidly accelerating population trends have created many critical issues which are testing the leadership capabilities of school administrators. (2) The literature gave evidence that communities of the middle class structure have substantial community pressure group activities.

Many school districts have experienced difficulties of various kinds - racial integration, teaching of controversial issues, financial support; some have appeared to manage these with more ease than others. This variation may be partially ascribed to the leadership quality of the superintendent.

There has existed during this decade a ground swell of popular interest in schools. Chapter II of this dissertation gives special attention to the research on taxpayer involvement in public education.

Most of the research on community pressure groups concerns the process and behavior of these groups as influentials

in the community. There are infrequent references to distinguish the leadership role of the superintendent and his style in dealing with community groups. A systematic appraisal of the superintendent's perception of existing community pressure groups and their effect on his power position is a vital area in need of study.

It is obvious from the literature that political forces are at work in American communities. These forces are directly affecting the role and position of school administration. The basic intent of this dissertation will be to analyze the actions of these groups and the implications of their activities for the leadership role of superintendents.

It is of utmost importance that school leaders know who the influential people and groups in the community are. Power structure varies from community to community. There is usually variation in beliefs about the school's role as an agent for orderly community progress. Also, there is an indeterminateness in predicting the focus of community groups in their interaction on school issues. It is therefore imperative that superintendents know how to develop constructive proposals which will elicit continual support of school programs.

Many superintendents have been relieved of their positions because of inability to harness constructively community forces which have attacked the policies and practices in the schools. The perception and analysis of community pressure

group attitudes and values by the superintendent is of considerable importance to his leadership role.

It is anticipated that this study will contribute to an intelligent understanding of forces within the community which influence the management of schools. Factors which may influence the superintendent's role, such as community power structure, passage of tax and bond issues, curriculum change, and budget matters will receive special consideration in the analysis of the data.

Those aspects of the study which indicate a need for change in the superintendent's role will serve as a valuable guide in the reassessment of that role. Patterns of negative variables which will be pointed out should serve as a guide in avoiding strategies harmful to the role of superintendents.

#### Limitations and Delimitations

A basic limitation of this study is the inherent fashion of the interview method. Even though many people are more willing to communicate orally than in writing, the interviewer must be cognizant of changes in voice, facial expression, and incidental comments so as to receive a valid understanding of the respondent's answers.

A further limitation of the method employed concerns the many variables expressed in common vocabulary with the respondents. It is difficult to extract and control true

reactions to issues on which a person interacts with another person and in a given situation.

In addition, the interview was structured, since this form of interview is more scientific in nature than unstructured ones. Lead questions were asked in order to clarify items on the questionnaire and to crystallize responses.

This study is delimited to schools in the Lake County, Illinois, area whose assessed valuation is above that of adjacent counties. It is further delimited by confining itself to the study of twenty-two selected superintendents in Lake County, Illinois.

#### Definition of Terms

##### Prominent Educators

College and University professors teaching in the Department of Education, Education Department Chairmen, College of Education Deans, superintendents, and assistant superintendents. All educators listed have had articles published relating to this study.  
(See Appendix C.)

##### Community Pressure Groups

Moehlman and von Zwall defined community pressure groups in terms of their tactics.

Some pressure groups are willing to operate on the acceptance of the intrinsic worth of their program; others impatiently attempt a quick realization of their objectives. The latter are apt to resort to pressure tactics. The pressure applied may be economic, political, or social. Pressure groups functioning politically force governmental agents and agencies to do



their bidding and to enact protective and discriminatory policies by means of propaganda, political threat, blackmail, and bribery.<sup>12</sup>

### Leadership

Leadership is an interpersonal, interacting influence, requiring supportive behavior on the part of both the follower and the formal leader, exercised in situations, and directed through the communication process, toward the attainment of a specified goal or goals.<sup>13</sup>

### Leadership Role

Leadership role is creating the conditions in which other people can get things done and above all, conditions in which the classroom teacher can function to his optimum ability. It further means assisting the school board in the formulation of policies governing the school system. Also implied is a key role in the development of general policies affecting the life of the community, state, and the nation. The superintendent must be expert in bringing out the best in his community and staff.<sup>14</sup>

### Power Structure

Communities are usually characterized by some form of power structure. For example, at least the following power groups of special interest to education will usually be found: the school power structure; governmental structures other

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<sup>12</sup>Arthur B. Moehlman and James A. von Zwall, School Public Relations (New York: Appleton-Century, Inc., 1957), p. 44.

<sup>13</sup>Rensis Likert, The Human Organization: Its Management and Value (New York: McGraw Hill Book Company, 1967), p. 196.

<sup>14</sup>Educational Policies Commission. The Unique Role of the Superintendent of Schools. National Education Association of the United States and The American Association of School Administrators (Washington, D. C., 1965), p. 1.

than schools; organizations of business men; professional groups, and labor; mass media of communications; and power leaders who may function informally or through recognized organizations. The term "power" as defined by Hunter, further delineates the description, "power is the act of men going about the business of moving other men to act in relation to themselves or the purposes of the group they represent."<sup>15</sup> Therefore, in each community may be found a power structure in which certain groups and/or individuals make decisions that influence the behavior and decisions of others. Kimball Wiles defines power structure as, "an influence by individuals or groups that affects community institutions in their decision-making."<sup>16</sup>

#### Formal Community Groups

Community groups are those which maintain programs and/or interests of an educational character. These groups may be divided by types into the following classes: civic, cultural, economic, fraternal, government, patriotic, political, professional, religious, welfare and youth. A common element among these formal community groups is their interest in problems dealing with individual pupil welfare, special services and events, school improvements, and community social conditions.

#### Extremist Groups

A system of handling problems by groups which advocates direct action through pressure campaigns, vigilante methods, and in some cases through secret organizations. Also a tendency for the extremists is to be uncompromising in

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<sup>15</sup>Ibid., p. 3.

<sup>16</sup>Kimball Wiles, Supervision for Better Schools, (Englewood Cliffs, N. J.: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1967), p. 37.

their position and to take an "either-or" position on matters of extreme complexity.<sup>17</sup>

#### Informal Community Groups

Informal activities of individuals or groups which focus on educational needs of the schools and community. This segment of the power structure may be categorized by its participation in school activities dealing with pupil welfare and educational programs. The use of the terms lay citizen, formal community pressure group, and informal community group will be used interchangeably in this study.

N.B. Although many pressures which are exerted on superintendents come from sources outside the school district, particularly from the state and federal governments and from court decisions, the emphasis in this study is on those pressures and pressure groups which exist within a school district.

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<sup>17</sup>Theodore W. Foat, "The Channels of Influence by Which Certain Pressure Groups Affect the Educational Program of Some Public Schools in New England" (unpublished report to the Executive Committee of the New England Development Council, November, 1962), p. 5.

## CHAPTER II

### REVIEW OF THE RELATED RESEARCH AND LITERATURE

A number of dissertations have been written on the subject of community power structures and their influence upon public institutions. Other research studies have dealt with the role of superintendents as seen by community pressure groups. Some dissertations were written on community pressure groups and their actual or potential effects on teacher morale, educational expenditures, leadership role of administrators, school board elections, and tax and bond referenda.

One study which has some relationship to the research being conducted in this dissertation was conducted by Seifert in 1967. The general purpose of his investigation was to examine the relationship of school administrators to the community power structure. This relationship was explored, using a political system model with demands and material support as inputs and interaction and approval and value orientation correlation as outputs. Results of the study clearly showed that the higher the frequency of interaction of school administrators and community influentials the greater the amount of material support from the community. A similar hypothesis examining the

relationship between chief school officers and community influentials yielded the same results. Another significant finding was that the more the school administration interacted with the community influentials the greater was the number of demands placed on the school organization by the total community.

Although statistically the data were not conclusive, some significant trends were established from the research in this study. The more the administrators and community influentials interacted, the more the community influentials approved of the school organization (+.80). (Numbers in parenthesis represent the rank order correlation for the four communities studied.) The more the administrators and community influentials interacted, the higher was the value orientation correlation between the two groups (+.80). The Allport Study of Values was used for these value dimensions. The higher the value orientation correlation of the administrators and the community influentials, the greater was the material support from the community (+.80).<sup>1</sup>

Seifert's findings suggest that administrators, if they want resources for the school organization, should interact with the community power structure. The results of this study also indicate that the more responsive the organization is to the community, the greater will be the demands placed on it. This

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<sup>1</sup>Kenneth Robert Seifert, "Interaction of Political Subsystems: School Administrators and Community Influentials" (unpublished Ed. D. dissertation. Cornell University, 1967).

responsiveness, however, has accompanying benefits such as financial support and value approval. It may also be inferred from this research that the political role of the superintendent may be his most important role as he performs his duties and responsibilities.

Miller's study in 1970 examined the effects that power structure association had upon the decision-making of members of boards of education. The data in this study were obtained from interviewing twenty-two suburban superintendents in the State of Missouri. The roles of school board members were analyzed on the basis of superintendent's classification of each member as to his power structure association. Three categories were used. Board members were identified as members of the community power structure, representatives of the power structure, and those not associated with the power structure. The following significant trends were reported in the findings of Miller's study:

- I. Members of the power structure more often gave information and opinions.
- II. Members of the power structure less often sought information or opinions and seldom followed.
- III. Members of the power structure were more often the standard setters or ego ideals.
- IV. Members of the power structure were less inclined to assume the role of self-confessor or help-seeker.

- V. Members of the power structure were more active in the task or process roles than representatives of the power structure, and representatives of the power structure were more active in the task or process roles than those<sup>2</sup> not associated with the power structure.

Evidence is given in Miller's research which suggests that school superintendents might expect school board members in the power structure or with close power structure association to assume contributory influence in decision-making. Also significant is the finding that power structure members are more active in decision-making roles.

Phillip Jessie Hobbs investigated the thesis that evidence could be found to support the idea that a relationship exists between a school administrator's ability to perceive the community power structure and his effectiveness in fulfilling role expectations as judged by his employer.<sup>3</sup>

Answers were sought to these questions: (1) Is there evidence that school administrators who perceive their community power structure more accurately than their colleagues are also the administrators whom school officials believe are most

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<sup>2</sup>Jack Austin Miller, "The Effects of the Power Structure Upon the Decision-Making Process of Boards of Education In Selected Missouri School Districts" (Unpublished Ed.D. dissertation, University of Missouri, 1970).

<sup>3</sup>Phillip Jesse Hobbs, "Perception of the Community Power Structure By the Public School Administrator As Related to His Effectiveness" (Unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, Purdue University, 1969).

effective in attaining behavioral goals of the organization?

(2) Is there evidence that certain personal and situational characteristics applicable to the school administrator and the school system where he is employed, respectively, relate to a school administrator's power perception? Two instruments were used to gather the data necessary to answer the questions raised in this study: (1) The Perception of Power Structure Questionnaire completed by the cooperating school administrators, and (2) The Leader Behavior Description Questionnaire completed by three school board members from each school district cooperating in the sample.

These conclusions were warranted: Hobbs found a relationship did exist between the school administrator's perception of the community power structure and his effectiveness in attaining behavioral goals of the organization. The selected characteristics of school administrator's tenure, pupil population size, and rural-urban make-up of the school population were not found to be variables identified in any way with the capacity of the school administrator to perceive the community power structure.

In another study by John Augie Spiess an attempt was made to investigate the influence of formal community pressure groups such as local newspaper and community organizations as it relates to the job priorities of school administrators. The approach used in Spiess's study was an historical analysis of



selected communities which gave evidence of pressure group activities.<sup>4</sup> No hypothesis or cause-and-effect were involved in the dissertation. Empirical evidence did stress the need for superintendents to analyze the sociometric variables included in newspaper accounts on issues relating to education. It was further reported that informative contacts through participation in civic organizations and community projects were beneficial to the superintendent's job security.

An interesting study by Farley in 1967 dealt with community pressure groups and their influence on school bond issue elections.<sup>5</sup> The author set out to identify members of community pressure groups who might influence voters' opinions on school bond issue elections. The data used in the study were gathered from a suburban community in Massachusetts. To accomplish the purposes of the dissertation, the writer first drew up a written questionnaire. After establishing validity and reliability through field tests of the questionnaire, it was mailed to 1,336 citizens who comprised a stratified sampling of the town's registered voters. Upon tabulation of the results of the sample in Farley's study, the following conclusions were drawn:

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<sup>4</sup>John Augie Spiess, "Power Structure and Influence Relationship to Educational Administration" (Unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, University of Iowa, 1967).

<sup>5</sup>Edward John Farley, "A Suburban Community Power Structure As It Relates to School Bond Issue Elections" (Unpublished Ed.D. dissertation, Boston University School of Education, 1967).

- I. The voters of the town were moderate in the amount of influence assigned to members of community pressure groups.
- II. New residents and the more educated voters were found to be quite interested in the opinions of the members of community pressure groups on school bond issues.
- III. The superintendent of schools was considered highly effective in influencing the opinions of voters concerning school bond issues.
- IV. Leadership ability, not position, was considered the main criterion upon which voters could be influenced by community pressure group members.

A study on parent attitudes and teacher morale in relationship to community unrest was made by Halliday in 1970. The purpose of this study was to conduct a comparative investigation of the internal-external environment of schools identified as having community unrest and of schools not experiencing such unrest regarding selected variables of parent attitudes and teacher morale.<sup>6</sup> The major purpose of the study was to provide community school leaders with one basis for assessing the internal-external environment of the community schools. A major finding of the study purports that teachers felt greater community pressure in unrest schools than in schools with no unrest. Parents exhibited a positive attitude toward the schools when programs were instituted to improve community

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<sup>6</sup>Malcom Frank Halliday, "An Investigation of Parent Attitudes and Teacher Morale In Relationship to Community Unrest" (Unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, Michigan State University, 1970).

attitudes toward the schools. There was found to be no significant difference in the overall teacher morale level for unrest schools, as compared with no unrest schools. The population for the study was 611 parents and 191 teachers from ten schools in Montgomery County, Maryland. Halliday's study has strong implications for the ombudsman concept to be considered for implementation at the local school level.

Braum's study gave attention to whether or not a power structure exists among professional educators and community groups in a suburban school district, and if one does exist, to evaluate the effects of its influence on educational issues in order that lay leadership within that school district may be utilized more effectively in school community relations. The conclusions of the study found that individuals and groups identified as influentials in the community and participating in the school-community relations project exert a greater degree of influence on educational issues than on other issues of general public concern. Individuals and groups identified within the school districts studied and active in school-community relations have the potential influence to increase financial support for education.<sup>7</sup> Implications of the above findings warrant boards of education to view a systematic link

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<sup>7</sup>Harry Jean Braum III, "The Evaluation of Power as It Is Related to the Involvement of Lay Leadership In School Community Relations" (Unpublished Ed.D. dissertation, University of Missouri, 1971).

between the various sub-systems existing within the school district and the educational program; and provide for educators a position of executive leadership which will foster involving the various publics in issues and programs concerning education in the community. It further seems that special attention should be given to the attitudes, values, and other indicators of group behavior as external forces that influence educational planning and decision-making.

A study recently completed at Northern Illinois University by Dwight W. Hall dealt with the effectiveness of lay participation in matters relating to policy-making and the public education process.<sup>8</sup> The case study approach was used in observing a citizen group which undertook the task of studying junior high school curriculum in a suburban Cook County, Illinois community. Hall used a questionnaire designed to determine attitude positions of the participants. These positions were assigned weights on a five-point scale. The first administration of the questionnaire served as the pretest; the second provided the post-test measurements. A control group was also selected at random from the residents of the school districts as a means of studying the attitude variables.

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<sup>8</sup>Dwight Willis Hall, "The Effects of School District Involvement on the Educational Attitudes of Community Adults" (Unpublished Ed.D. dissertation, Northern Illinois University, 1971).

Five hypotheses were presented in a null position and tested on each of twelve attitudinal items for significant differences between the means of the experimental and control groups. The author concluded in this study that a person-to-person basis of communication is likely to be more effective than is the exposure to the more traditional means of school district communication with parents. Further implications of the findings warrant school officials in utilizing the Citizen's Advisory Committee strategy to modify community opinions about school issues. The conclusions in Hall's study are in general agreement with current trends in the use of Citizen's Advisory Committees. Dissertations by Carrere, University of South Carolina, 1971<sup>9</sup> and Hovet, George Washington University, 1971<sup>10</sup> concur with the findings of Hall's study.

The following synthesis may be made from a review of the research as reported at this point in the dissertation:

- I. Systems should be developed which allow superintendents and boards of education to outline goals and objectives to community groups.
- II. Establishment of public relations programs by the schools can be a vital link in the constructive use of community pressure groups.

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<sup>9</sup>Thomas A. Carrere, "A Study of The Power Structure of a Selected South Carolina County" (Unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, University of South Carolina, 1971).

<sup>10</sup>Mary Rockwell Hovet, "A Study To Identify and Describe Productive School-Community Relationships in Howard County, Maryland" (Unpublished Ed.D. dissertation, George Washington University, 1971).

- III. Community pressure groups have the potential to influence financial support to schools.
- IV. The community power structure has a greater influence on the schools than in any other area of community activity.
- V. A systematic involvement of citizen groups in the educational process usually will lead to stronger support of school programs and needs.
- VI. The leadership style of the chief school officer is a contributing factor to the types of activities in which community pressure groups will engage.

#### Considerations Regarding the Community

The changes in most schools have kept pace with the changes in society. Superintendents, however, frequently fail to communicate the many changes that have been made in methods, curriculum, and philosophy of the modern school to the community. Assumptions are made which anticipate that the general public understands and accepts these changes when in all too many cases teachers themselves have only accepted after years of intense concern and study. Innovative program development, as reported by many principals and superintendents, must pay attention to the non-accepting teacher who can add feelings of confusion and frustration to legitimate understandings of the program.

Morphet and fellow authors report that changes in education have occurred not only in the variety of educational opportunities but also in the methods of teaching and student

control.<sup>11</sup> As the size of school districts has grown larger, the schools have tended to come less under the immediate control of parents. Community groups, therefore, have come to play a larger role in decision-making regarding many educational matters.

The implications of the rapid changes in the community and school maximize the need for superintendents to study, evaluate, and utilize these community variables to foster the orderly growth and development of the educational program.

Earlier in this chapter, importance was placed on the need for superintendents to provide the vehicle by which community support could be generated toward the schools. Before any strategy may be formulated, however, an evaluation of the community character should be made. For example, most communities possess certain limiting characteristics over which the superintendent has little control. James and his colleagues<sup>12</sup> have suggested that these limits are found in the aspirations of the people for education, in the wealth of the school district most often expressed in assessed valuation, and in the governmental arrangements controlling access to money for

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<sup>11</sup> Edgar L. Morphet, Roe L. Johns, and Theodore L. Reller, Educational Administration, Concepts, Practices, and Issues (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1961), p. 129.

<sup>12</sup> H. Thomas James, J. Alan Thomas, and Harold J. Dyck, "Wealth, Expenditure and Decision-Making for Education" (Cooperative Research Project No. 1241 (Stanford, California: School of Education, Stanford University, 1963)).

schools. Upon analysis of these community considerations, the superintendent can then explore the types of relationships with the community that can best serve the interests of the schools.

Carter and his colleagues<sup>13</sup> postulate that the precepts held by the people of the community concerning the quality of the school program and staff is related to the style of communication used by the superintendent. With respect to communication, people in larger communities relied heavily upon the mass media, while in smaller communities, face-to-face communications were seen as more important. The implications of both James's and Carter's study suggest the need for educators to be clear about community limitations and perceptions when working with community groups. Such variables as the power structure influentials, interdependence of groups, and community aspirations cannot be minimized by superintendents in the development of their priorities for the schools.

An ambitious research effort involving 122 districts in four states (Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, and Illinois) was completed in 1968 at the University of Florida. Johns and Kimbrough<sup>14</sup> analyzed fiscal policy in districts with more than

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<sup>13</sup>Richard F. Carter, et. al., Communities and Their Schools (Cooperative Research Project No. 308, School of Education, Stanford University, 1960).

<sup>14</sup>Roe L. Johns and Ralph B. Kimbrough, The Relationship of Socio-Economic Factors, Educational Leadership Patterns, and Elements of Community Power Structures to Local School Fiscal Policy (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Office of Education OE-10-146, May, 1968).



a 20,000 resident population in relation to ability to support education and elasticity in demand for education. They also identified factors associated with change in fiscal policy in school districts, and assessed the power system in each district in order to ascertain the relationship of selected behavioral and socio-economic elements of power and financial effort to support education.<sup>15</sup> Some findings relevant to the discussion in this chapter are: (1) the power structures in low financial effort districts are more monopolistic than those in high effort districts; (2) school administrators in high financial effort districts are more politically active in resolving both educational and general community issues than the superintendents of low effort districts; (3) tenure of superintendents tends to be shorter in the competitive than in the monopolistic power structures; (4) community pressure groups in the low effort districts seem to produce closed social systems whereas the opposite is true in high effort school districts. This research is unique in the sense that Johns and Kimbrough have related power and pressure group activity to other significant variables, such as records of support for education.

The implications of the "four-state study" stress the need for school officials to be aware of not only the political structure of the community, but also of the socio-economic variables which have direct relationship to the style and role

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<sup>15</sup>Ibid., pp. 13-14.

of the leadership to be employed to gain support.

In concluding this section, attention is called to the fact that the community determines quantity and quality of educational provisions made. Boards of education and their representatives must understand the values, ability, and efforts of the community as central elements in the decision-making process.

#### Ancillary Considerations

The research and literature stress the pluralistic nature of American communities. This point is evident in the variety of organizations and groups which have an interest in educational matters. Some of these groups have a sincere desire to support the schools in their financial and educational needs. Others may have as their primary goal something which is not for the best interests of education. Indeed, some of these groups seem perfectly willing to harm the schools if this is necessary to further their own interests. These organizations are commonly referred to as Extremist Groups. An appropriate perspective on extremist organizations was suggested by Thomas W. Braden, formerly President of the California State Board of Education, in an address in December, 1963, to the California superintendents of schools. In analyzing the pressures facing superintendents, he stressed the importance of honest communication with the general public as the primary means of combating

the influence of these pressure groups on the schools.

I have said on many occasions that I regard the pressure of right-wing extremists as today's principle source of danger to freedom to learn in California. But there is another danger. We have seen it in the past. We will see it again in the future.

Whenever I get letters from people who demand that I do something about ending what they call the 'fascist influence of the American Legion in California schools', or when I hear people say that our textbooks should include some mention of what they call 'our failure to join with the Russians in peaceful coexistence and disarmament,' I know that I am in the presence of the mirror image of the John Birch Society. The Terrible Simplifier of the left, like their counterparts on the right, view the troubles of this proud earth as the result of some 'conspiracy' some 'plot' involving the schools and their staffs.<sup>16</sup>

Community pressure groups on both the right and left of the continuum, such as the John Birch Society on the right, and Students for a Democratic Society (S.D.S.) on the left, are examples of organized pressure groups which have a special interest in controlling the educational programs of the schools. No attempt is made in this dissertation to describe in detail each of the organizations which have some concern for educational policy-making. It is important, however, for educators to be cognizant of the goals and interests of these groups and the influence they may generate in the community which could be negative to the programs and policies of the board of education. The analysis focuses on pressure groups collectively in order to

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<sup>16</sup> Thomas W. Braden, in an address to the California superintendents of schools, San Francisco, California, December 3, 1963. Pp. 4-5 in mimeographed text.

assess their total impact on school superintendents. A case study of one pressure group is presented in Chapter IV as an example of specific tactics employed by such groups. These types of organizations are paying increasing attention to the schools as a means by which they can influence the life-style of millions of Americans in the future.

As public interest in education mounts, superintendents can expect that more groups will take an interest in school policy-making. As a consequence, educational questions are becoming increasingly controversial in many locales. School board and administrative decisions which used to be routine have become matters for debate. There often are more than two sides in such controversies, and communities sometimes become polarized as a result of them. An excellent example of this controversy is the battle waged over Health and Sex Education Programs these past few years. It should be noted that the job of a school superintendent is increasingly one of attempting to resolve and live with public conflict. Characteristics of a successful administrator appear to be his ability to progress through conflict by working with community groups and a capacity to live with the conflict as a necessary variable to his position in the community. A later chapter in this dissertation will study a school district's efforts in dealing with an extremist pressure group in a community.

Educators should seek ways to establish and define legitimate channels for dissent and to utilize their leadership role to direct these groups to worthwhile projects for the school and community. The critical factor toward which superintendents must work centers on the strategy of communication to be employed which will foster criticisms of the schools in a constructive way.

### Rationale

Of the dissertations reviewed, none made any in-depth attempt to investigate the superintendent's perception of community pressure groups on his leadership role. The literature quoted in this chapter did, however, indicate that there could be a significant relationship between leadership role and community influentials. The prominent educators referred to in this study, such as Morphet, Hunter, and Moehlman, did focus on the importance of superintendents to study and evaluate the community power structure and its influence on the quasi-agencies of the community. Seifert's study found that communication was the key to effect community pressure group support. Miller studied the effects that power structure association had upon the decision-making of boards of education. The effects of sociometric variables was the focus of Spiess's study on the leadership role of superintendents. A study by Farley dealt with only one perception of the community power structure, that

of its effect on tax and bond issues. The research by Braum and Hall dealt with a case-study approach to community influentials and their perception of the schools.

The study by Hobbs does have some relationship to the study presently being researched. An analysis was made of the superintendent's ability to perceive the community power structure and its expectancy of his effectiveness.

The present study differs from the other research in that an analysis will be made of the superintendent's perception of community pressure groups and his insights on the degree of influence these groups have on the operation of the schools. Through the use of a structures interview guide, a study will be made of the effect that these pressure groups have in the following areas: (1) instructional program, (2) school personnel, (3) fiscal support, and (4) leadership style of superintendent. The proposed research also differs from the studies mentioned in that this study focuses on community actions as perceived by superintendents and the ensuing side effects from the interaction that takes place.

### CHAPTER III

#### PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS OF DATA

This chapter contains three major aspects of the dissertation: (1) the hypotheses of the study; (2) a rationale for each hypothesis; and (3) the propositions used to test the hypotheses. The propositions to test the hypotheses were scattered throughout the instrument to help maximize the objectivity of the responses. (See Appendix B.) The superintendents' responses and rationale for their particular choices will be presented along with a critique and analysis of the data.

The basic approach used in this study was the administration of a questionnaire. In addition, an interview technique was employed to elicit the respondent's personal feelings about his responses on the instrument. Approximately one hour was devoted by each of the twenty-two superintendents to the interview and questionnaire.

Lead questions were asked throughout the interview such as: In what ways has the role of the superintendent changed in the past few years? Do you feel you are more an administrator than an educator in your job? In what aspects of your job do you spend the most time? What do you view the role of the

superintendent to be in the next five years? What type of leadership style do you feel is most effective in dealing with the public? With "in-house" staff? With Board Members? (See Appendix D).

Because of the many variables inherent in the questionnaire, it is important to watch for any potential response bias. The structured interview was used, therefore, to probe for the respondent's reasoning to his responses. The superintendents' reactions to key words in the propositions were explored verbally for further clarification and understanding of each response on the questionnaire. Awareness of the subjective bias in the interview technique is important and the following quote supports this form of research:

By means of the interview, it is possible to secure much data that cannot be obtained through the less personal procedure of distributing a reply blank. People generally do not care to put confidential information in writing; they may want to see who is getting the information and receive guarantees as to how it will be used; they need the stimulation of personal contacts in order to be "drawn out" . . . Furthermore, the interview enables the researcher to follow up leads and take advantage of small clues; in complex material, where the development is likely to proceed in any direction, no prepared instrument can perform the task. Again, the interview permits the interviewer to gain an impression of the person who is giving the facts, to form some judgments of the truth in the facts,<sup>1</sup> to "read between the lines" things that are not said.

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<sup>1</sup>Carter V. Good, A. S. Barr and Douglas E. Scates, The Methodology of Educational Research (New York: Appleton-Century-Crafts, Inc., 1941), p. 378.



The responses of the superintendents to the propositions were categorized on a modified Likert scale. The dispersement of propositions on the questionnaire was arranged in the following order to test the seven hypotheses:

RELATIONSHIP OF HYPOTHESIS AND PROPOSITIONS ON THE  
QUESTIONNAIRE

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<u>Hypothesis</u>	<u>Propositions</u>
1	1, 3, 21, 25
2	4, 6, 16, 27
3	5, 9, 22, 23, 24
4	7, 13, 20, 16, 31
5	10, 14, 17, 28
6	8, 11, 12, 15, 19
7	2, 18, 19, 30

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The number to the left in the above table represents the hypothesis and the number to the right represents the propositions to be tested by the hypothesis. The table should be read as follows: Hypothesis I is related to the responses on propositions 1, 3, 21, 25 on the questionnaire, and so forth.

The superintendents were asked during the interview to express their responses according to personal feelings in one of the five following degrees: Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Undecided (U), Disagree (D), and Strongly Disagree (SD). To score the scale, the alternative responses are weighted +2, +1,

0, -1, -2, respectively, from Strongly Agree to Strongly Disagree. If all the superintendents were to Strongly Agree to a proposition, that proposition would receive +44 points. If all the superintendents Strongly Disagree to a proposition, that proposition would receive -44 points. As the numbers increase positively, so does the superintendent's agreement with the proposition. As the numbers increase negatively, so does the superintendent's disagreement with the proposition.

The data on each proposition are presented by use of percentages and numbers: An example of how to interpret the data is given below:

SA	A	U	D	SD
(4) 18%	(12) 55%	(2) 9%	(4) 18%	(0)

(Total points received +16)

1. (SA) Strongly Agree, (A) Agree, (U) Undecided, (D) Disagree, (SD) Strongly Disagree.
2. The number in parentheses represents the number of superintendents making that particular selection.
3. The number next to the parentheses is the number of superintendents selecting that particular response converted to a percentage.
4. The graphical representation would read, four superintendents, or 18 percent of the sample, selected the alternative Strongly Agree. Twelve, or 55 percent, selected the alternative Agree. Two, or 9 percent, selected Undecided. Four,

or 18 percent selected Disagree. No respondents selected Strongly Disagree. All numerical values were reported to the nearest whole number.

5. The verbal comments elicited during the administration of the questionnaire are reported in the analysis of the data where appropriate. Remarks of respondents are included where they may assist to clarify the interpretation of the questionnaire data presented.
6. The number of propositions used to test the hypotheses are minimal. However, the depth of the interview method gave additional information on each proposition, which was used to assist in the interpretation of the data. The acceptance or rejection of the hypotheses was based on the data obtained by utilizing both of these sources.
7. The total weight of the proposition was calculated as follows:

<u>Response</u>	<u>Number of Superintendents</u>	<u>Weight</u>	<u>Points</u>
SA	4	+2	+ 8
A	12	+1	+12
U	2	0	0
D	4	-1	- 4
SD	0	-2	<u>0</u>
		Total	+16

## HYPOTHESIS I

The Superintendent is influenced positively by community pressure groups in the development and implementation of the instructional program.

This above hypothesis deals with the question of whether superintendents perceive community pressure groups as essential variables in their planning for curriculum change. The first hypothesis further attempts to verify or reject the personal feeling of the superintendent about the influence of these groups in the implementation of the instructional program. The questions to be answered, therefore, are: do the administrators surveyed view community pressure groups as necessary factors to consider when they are contemplating a change in the curriculum, and do they view these groups as positive variables when planning their strategy for change in the instructional program? Propositions one, three, twenty-one, and twenty-five pertain to this hypothesis. J. Lloyd Trump and Delmas F. Miller, in their book Secondary School Curriculum Improvement, state:

Historically, the construction of the curriculum has been created at the local level. A main objective has been to involve as many people as possible. Membership of the curriculum committee has consisted of pupils, teachers, lay citizens and school administrators as well as curriculum specialists. It has been a grassroots theory of complete communication. Recent events have effected a change in both emphasis and direction.

The involvement of lay citizens has backfired to some extent. Citizens groups have been infiltrated by extremists and vested interest groups. In many instances, these groups have become pressure agencies

for their own ideas rather than for the welfare of boys and girls. This may be the fault of educational leaders who have failed to instruct these groups in proper educational thinking. Where lay groups are asked to participate in curriculum development, they should be carefully oriented and their role defined. Involvement is desirable, but the role of each participating group ought to be mutually understood.<sup>2</sup>

The above quote is consistent with the thinking of prominent educators in their regard to utilizing lay citizens in curriculum development. There seems to be a trend, as reported in the literature, of a need for careful planning by school administrators before involvement of community groups is acceptable.

What position, then, does the superintendent take in the involvement of lay citizens and community groups in curriculum change? What leadership strategy will be most effective in utilizing their potential? To ignore their presence is not a realistic solution for any contemporary superintendent to take. Historically, however, community involvement in educational program development has been a "lip serve" approach in some school districts. It should be noted that present trends seem to be more acceptable of their involvement especially when programs dealing with controversial subjects are contemplated.

One of the superintendents participating in this study stated during his interview: "An educational leader must make

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<sup>2</sup>J. Lloyd Trump and Delmas F. Miller, Secondary School Improvement Proposals and Procedures (Boston: Allyn and Bacon, Inc., 1968), p. 32.

these pressure groups think they are really making a contribution without allowing them to dictate program development to the staff." Another felt that the important variable to consider is that these groups can be the superintendent's best vehicle in explaining the instructional program to the public. "Keep them on your side; it will pay dividends in the long run." An interesting strategy employed by one superintendent was to hold monthly open meetings in the community to discuss the programs of the school and seek volunteers to assist the staff in para-professional capacities.

#### Proposition 1

Superintendents would feel more secure in their positions if they were aware of the community power structure:

SA	A	U	D	SD
(4) 18%	(12) 55%	(2) 9%	(4) 18%	(0)

(Total points received +16)

Sixteen of the superintendents agreed with this proposition. The respondents generally felt that a superintendent can eliminate many problems if he is familiar with the power influentials within the community.

A minority of the superintendents felt that they should be more cognizant of "in-house" influentials and, of course, the power structure of their respective boards. An interesting commentary by one superintendent was "the board has the

responsibility of representing the entire community. I'll be aware of community needs through my interaction with the board of education."

### Proposition 3

Superintendents should include community pressure groups in an advisory capacity when contemplating curriculum change.

SA	A	U	D	SD
(3) 14%	(11) 50%	(2) 9%	(6) 27%	(0)

(Total points received +11)

A significant number of the superintendents remarked that by involving these groups in school affairs they can assist in developing practices which will generate the use of their talents in a positive way toward the schools. Some respondents felt that community groups need an outlet to express their feelings; the schools are a possible agency on which to ventilate these attitudes.

The superintendents who disagreed with the proposition were of the opinion that community pressure groups could gain significant influence on the schools if they were allowed to participate even in an advisory capacity. One comment made follows: "After all, I've got enough problems just getting my staff interested in curriculum work - why could the issues further?"

The two superintendents who were undecided qualified their responses by stating: "under special circumstances I would consider allowing their participation."

Proposition 21

Superintendents should seek the advice and counsel of community pressure groups in the evaluation of the instructional program.

SA	A	U	D	SD
(0)	(8) 36%	(0)	(14) 64%	(0)

(Total points received -6)

The key words in this proposition are "advice," "counsel," and "evaluation." From the observations made it seems that superintendents are concerned that there be judicious use of any community group in the evaluation of the instructional program. A significant majority of the respondents felt that the job of evaluation was in the province of the board of education and its professional staff. Typical comments made during the interviews were: "evaluation is too important to place in the hands of lay citizens," "the superintendent is asking for trouble if he uses that strategy," "outsiders don't understand the many variables involved in evaluation," "we have enough problems with teachers; this would only serve to make them more militant."



Eight of the superintendents, however, were of the feeling that a restrictive type of involvement in evaluation of instructional programs would be acceptable. During his interaction with these respondents the interviewer sensed that their reactions were based on a philosophical position. "After all these schools do belong to the community so they have a right to be involved;" "If your staff is doing a good job of teaching you have nothing to be concerned about in their involvement with evaluation."

#### Proposition 25

A course of study in a controversial area should not be offered if special interest groups do not favor its implementation in the schools.

SA	A	U	D	SD
(0)	(0)	(0)	(17) 77%	(5) 23%

(Total points received -24)

All of the superintendents disagreed with proposition twenty-five. Their feeling was that it is the basic responsibility of the curriculum specialist to make the recommendations in the subject areas. The concern that parents and community pressure groups may have a subjective bias or special interest in opposing course offerings was stated by many of the respondents.

This proposition was one area in which a number of the superintendents interviewed had experienced attacks from community pressure groups, especially when contemplating programs in Health and Sex Education and Drug Abuse Education. A case study will be presented in Chapter V of this dissertation dealing with the tactics and procedures of a community pressure group in their attempt to stop the implementation of a Health and Sex Education Program in a suburban Lake County school district.

There was complete agreement by the superintendents on the need for communicating with these groups as an essential component on all issues they may raise. There was general agreement, also, that communication with these groups at the board of education level was an additional factor to employ as an effective procedure in negating propaganda tactics.

More than half the respondents indicated that community pressure group members really do not understand the total educational needs of children. There was agreement, however, that where the superintendent and board of education did not provide opportunities to allow some form of group participation, future support from these agencies could be hindered.

One superintendent felt that the accelerated mobility of population and the changing socio-economic character of his school district imposes a need to at least listen to community group concerns about educational programs.

Summary Table for Hypothesis I

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Undecided	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Proposition 1 (Points +11)	(14) 18%	(13) 55%	(2) 9%	(4) 18%	(0)
Proposition 3 (Points +11)	(3) 14%	(11) 50%	(2) 9%	(6) 27%	(0)
Proposition 21 (Points -6)	(0)	(8) 36%	(0)	(14) 64%	(0)
Proposition 25 (Points -24)	(0)	(0)	(0)	(17) 77%	(5) 23%

Summary and Analysis

There seems to be agreement in the literature that some forms of community involvement in the instructional program is advisable strategy for superintendents to consider. The purpose of this strategy is to create a positive influence on these groups toward the schools and their programs.

These same sources, however, express concern about pressure groups usurping the authority of school officials and school board members.

Throughout the personal interviews the respondents expressed a strong desire to work with the community power structures and special interest groups, but not at the cost of allowing these agencies to control or restrict educational programs.

Overall, the superintendents did feel that communication was an essential component in working with power groups. One superintendent did state that chief school officials seem to lack the background and training to deal effectively with pressure variables. He further added, "that this may be the primary reason why many of us are influenced by these groups in our administering of the schools."

Stanley L. Mularz in his study of leadership style reported the following observations:

Respondents appear to be reluctant to include parents in the decision-making process and sharing with them viewpoints and information on what constitutes a good quality of teaching. For this reason, more than half of the respondents exercise restraint in allowing the participation of lay citizens in school affairs.<sup>3</sup>

Superintendents seem to be re-examining their attitudes toward citizen involvement in the schools. A number of respondents expressed a concern about the large amount of time they expend in this area of operation. A number of superintendents did state in specific language that they accepted the influence of community pressure groups. One respondent went so far as to express an attitude of complete cooperation with community influentials as necessary for the security of his position. The respondent's personal feelings suggest that an atmosphere of

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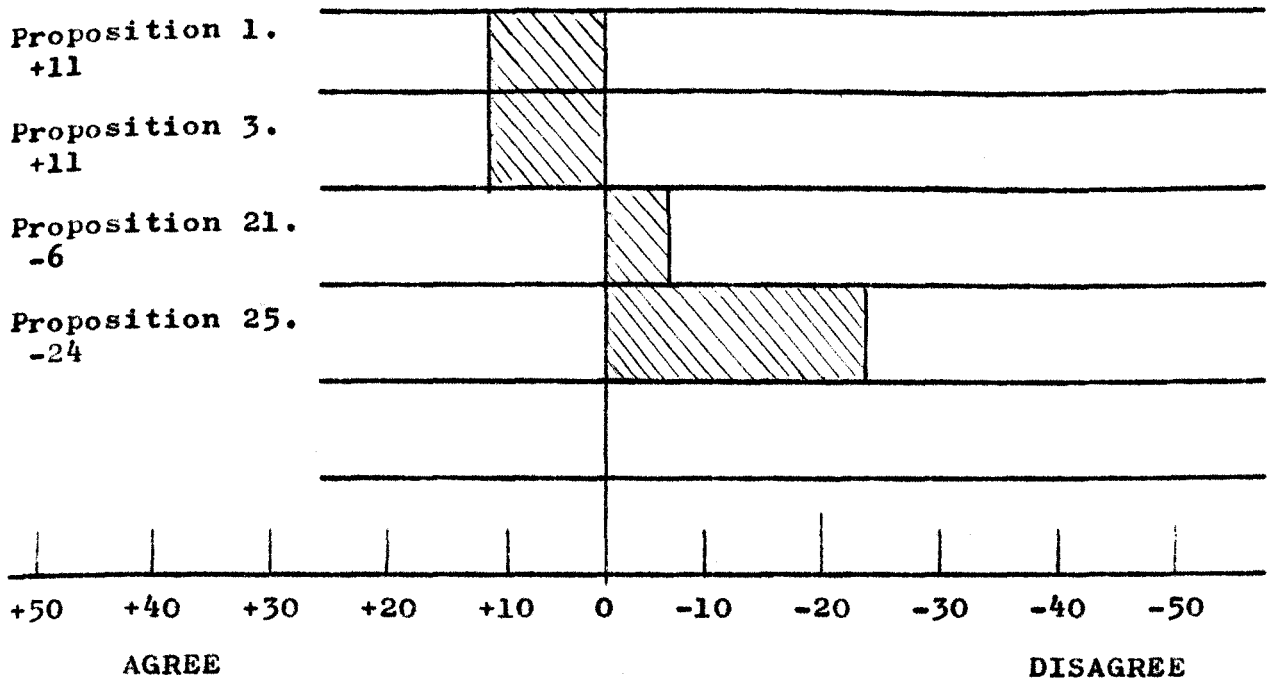
<sup>3</sup>Stanley L. Mularz, "Implications of Leadership Style and Goal Setting On Leadership Processes As Perceived By School Superintendents" (unpublished Ed.D. dissertation, Loyola University, 1971).

home-school cooperation is the intrinsic factor which must be evident in the interaction with the community.

It seems that superintendents are giving additional attention to matters of a community nature. Evidence in the interview instrument points to increasing involvement of school officials in the development of public relations programs. Further evidence gained during the personal interview points to superintendents becoming alarmed about the harm these groups can effect. For example, a quote from one of the respondents illustrates this position: "I'm more concerned today about what I can do to influence and develop positive attitudes with these groups; we must have their support if we plan on moving ahead educationally in this community."

The data indicate that the respondents are aware of the power that these groups could exercise in the influencing of public opinion toward the schools. The analysis of data also suggests that these influences should be guided toward positive feelings on the programs in operation. The dictum of this attitude rests with the concern of the superintendent that these community influences are channeled and restricted to areas which will not cause unnecessary harm to the operation of the educational program.

### SUMMARY GRAPH FOR HYPOTHESIS I.



PROPOSITION 1. Superintendents would feel more secure in their positions if they were aware of the community power structure.

PROPOSITION 3. Superintendents should include community pressure groups in an advisory capacity when contemplating curriculum change.

PROPOSITION 21. Superintendents should seek the advice and counsel of community pressure groups in the evaluation of the instructional program.

PROPOSITION 25. A course of study in a controversial area should not be offered if special interest groups do not favor its implementation in the schools.

### Hypothesis I

The superintendent is influenced positively by community pressure groups in the development and implementation of the instructional program.

In the light of the accumulated data, this hypothesis cannot be accepted. It assumes that superintendents will be influenced in all phases of the instructional program. Educators are giving greater time and effort to working with community pressure groups in matters of instruction. However, there is a concern that this role be one of advice and not decision-making. Although superintendents do feel that they would be more secure in their positions by working with the community power structure, their attitude toward involvement of these groups in evaluation and selection of subjects to be taught was generally negative.

Superintendents indicated that sincere effort should be made to seek the support and trust of community pressure groups but in manners which would not negate the role of professional staff members. There is little doubt that the superintendents surveyed in this study are aware of the importance of the groups and the power the groups can bring to bear on the schools, yet only in a few cases was this considered as the most important variable to be considered in the operation of the instructional program.

School organizations are attempting to give community groups a greater share in at least the advisory aspects of the instructional program, but a conservative attitude is evident from the superintendents' group in these matters.

The personal attitude of superintendents is a factor in their rejection of Hypothesis I. Many of the respondents shared their past experiences on community pressure groups and their involvement in school matters, and in a majority of these experiences shared, indicated a low-confidence and trust level for any group participation in the decision-making aspect of the instructional program.

Superintendents do not feel that they can allow special interest groups to have a direct involvement because it may foster a means to further compromise their power position. There was, however, an attitude exhibited which stressed the desire to give community groups some involvement on the instructional program at an advisory level only. There is evidence that superintendents are beginning to view the role of lay-citizens and community groups in these matters of program development as essential needs in order to generate support for policies and programs.

Superintendents must realize the changing patterns in their roles as educators. Communities may no longer support the ideas of others without being given some level of participation in the decisions which affect the public. If school officials



expect community support of their programs, then they must expect to allow others to share in the planning and development phases of school operations.

The superintendent should not preclude the support that can be generated for school programs from community pressure groups. The literature has emphasized the need for greater participation of the community in school matters; it seems, however, that the administrators surveyed are not in agreement with this position. There is a lack of mutual trust and confidence which must be remedied if significant inroads are to be made in the involvement of the public in educational decision-making. Superintendents and their staffs should strive for understanding the needs, aspirations, goals, and attitudes of all public bodies in their pursuit for educational quality. Past experiences which may have been negative should not necessarily cause school officials and boards of education to reflect attitudes of indifference or suspicion on the intents of community pressure groups. Issues should be judged on their merits and possible effect on fostering better educational institutions.

Finally, the superintendent must be cognizant of the changing climate of suburban communities. The mobility of population, taxpayer concern on costs of education, teacher militancy, and price and wage freezes are some of the more important factors that are causing a decrease in support of educational programs. Strategies which elicit community

participation in school affairs can be effective means of changing this attitude to a more supportive role.

## HYPOTHESIS II

The superintendent's perception of organized community pressure groups is a positive influence on his financial administration of the school district.

This hypothesis deals with the question of finding the degree of relationship that exists between a superintendent's attitude toward community groups and the influence of these groups on his financial operation of the schools. Propositions four, six, sixteen, and twenty-seven pertain to this hypothesis.

Michael W. Kirst, a political scientist associated with Stanford University says:

Superintendents and school boards alone do not have enough political influence to provide for continuous large increases in educational expenditures by any level of government. A way to accumulate more influence over curriculum, personnel, budget on facilities to non-school groups that will support higher taxes is to involve these groups in school matters. In effect, a superintendent can invest his limited stock of influence with outside allies to gain more budget instead of consuming all his influence in internal policy making.<sup>4</sup>

Kirst's viewpoint represents an alternative which is being implemented in a number of larger urban school districts. This position seems to reflect the attitude that if school officials hope to gain financial support from the community they

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<sup>4</sup>Michael W. Kirst, The Politics of Education At The Local, State, And Federal Levels (Berkeley, Calif.: McCutchan Publishing Corporation, 1970), p. 13.

must not separate themselves from the political forces that can influence the financial operations of the school plant.

There is a growing use of the tactic of protest to extend increased community influence on the financial operation of the schools. Although it may vary from actual boycott to defeat of tax and bond issues, school officials are becoming more cognizant of a need to inform the general public on the financial operation so as to counteract this negative opposition to their policies.

A superintendent who had experienced the defeat of two tax increases in the past year reported during the interview:

Climate just isn't right today for the passage of tax and bond issues. The attitude of parents is changing toward the quality of education they want for their children - even if they can afford the increase in their property tax, they seem to resent any additional revenue for the schools. I feel, therefore, that it's most important for superintendents to involve the community in a legitimate manner on issues dealing with the financial operation of the schools.

As more and more tax and bond issues are being defeated throughout the country and along with taxpayer concern about the financial aspects of district operations, superintendents must seek alternative strategies for support.

#### Proposition 4

Superintendents should actively seek the support of community pressure groups in the passage of tax and bond issues.

SA	A	U	D	SD
(6) 27.27%	(11) 50%	0	(5) 22.73%	0
(Total points received +18)				

The response to this proposition shows a significant trend toward accepting support from pressure groups in the passage of tax and bond issues. A number of comments made to support this position suggest that superintendents feel they must take the assistance of any organization in times like these. Where passing a referendum is most infrequent, several superintendents said that if they could pass a bond issue the third or fourth time around it would be considered time well spent on their part.

The attitude here seems to reflect the general mood of taxpayer indifference to the financial needs of boards of education.

More than half the respondents stated that they considered involvement of community pressure groups in matters related to budget and operation as a possible way to generate support in future elections.

A significant number of respondents felt that they had confidence in allowing community groups to be involved in an advisory capacity with tax and bond referenda. There seems to be a movement by superintendents at least in attitude, if not by practice, in sharing some of the decision-making in this area of operation with school-oriented groups.

#### Proposition 6

Superintendents should elicit the support and advice of community pressure groups in the formulation of the school district budget.

SA	A	U	D	SD
0	(4) 18.18%	(4) 18.18%	(11) 50%	(3) 13.64%
(Total points received -13)				

There was a significant amount of scatter in the respondents' reactions to the above proposition. Approximately twenty percent, or four of the superintendents, felt that they should seek support and advice on budget matters from community pressure groups. However, at the other extreme, three respondents, or fourteen percent strongly disagreed with this type of venture.

Personal concern for the schools may be more likely found in smaller communities and towns. The superintendents agreeing to this proposition were from the smaller school districts in the sample. The average enrollment of these four districts was 435 students; the average enrollment of the three districts on the opposite end of the continuum was 2,600. These limited data support the theory that smaller communities may be more actively involved in school budget procedures.

Widening of the base for decision-making is in keeping with the democratic ideals of our nation. Also, expanding the number of participants in school affairs, if for no other reason than to prevent disruption of the educational program, is a worthy endeavor.

Some of the superintendents were not in favor of sharing their decision-making role with influentials outside of

the schools, especially community organizations or groups of lay citizens who had special interests in the school's financial operation. One respondent said, "We have a taxpayers' association that has been attempting to get involved in our spending policies. If the board ever gives in to their demands, I would resign my position." Another added, "I don't mind at all having groups advise the administration in these matters; my concern rests with being able to perceive if these groups are sincere, or out to push their own special interest."

The respondents expressed an attitude of incomplete trust in decisions these groups might make in budget matters.

#### Proposition 16

Boards of education must negotiate with community pressure groups.

SA		A		U		D		SD
(5)	23%	(10)	45%	(0)		(7)	32%	(0)

(Total points received +13)

Eldersveld has advanced the following functions of organized interest groups in the community power structure:

1. Interest groups serve as important centers of interaction between influentials.
2. Organizations provide an important public forum for getting reactions to projects and for obtaining public support for proposals.
3. Emerging leaders obtain valuable training in community service leadership in organizations.

4. Solidary organizations often extend much power for a special institutional sector of the community.
5. Organizations help maintain the separate identity of special interest groups.
6. A popular concept holds that citizens express themselves most effectively through organized interest groups and that they are in turn influenced by their organization.<sup>5</sup>

Implications of Eldersveld's thesis is that organized interest groups can be used by influentials for a complexity of tasks in the decision-making process. Proposition sixteen is designed to seek the superintendent's position on direct negotiations with community pressure groups as a means of influencing their support of the educational program.

Only seven of the twenty-two superintendents indicated a negative response to any form of negotiations with special interest groups. In a majority of those cases, each had experienced recent attacks by such organizations as taxpayer groups and home owner's associations. The data show a feeling, on behalf of the superintendents, that "face to face" discussions with these groups may serve a constructive purpose.

It seems that the strategy being employed by other superintendents is to avoid conflicts with interest groups even if this may mean compromising on certain issues. The comment that follows illustrates the point:

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<sup>5</sup>Samuel J. Eldersveld, American Interest Groups: Implications For Theory and Method (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh, 1968), p. 188.

Interviewer: Just where do you draw the line in negotiations on issues brought before you by community pressure groups?

Respondent: We have a small community and we all know each other and even when there are differences of opinion I can always talk the board and the group into a compromise. We have been careful, however, not to allow any special interest group to feel that they can dictate to the board of education.

### Proposition 27

Superintendents should pay attention to budget matters which reflect the interests of community pressure groups.

SA	A	U	D	SD
(5) 22%	(15) 69%	(0)	(2) 9%	(0)

(Total points received +23)

In some communities there are many active community pressure groups, well organized to exert influence on school issues. The ability of these groups to gain sufficient support temporarily to influence school board policy is a constant concern to school officials.

Data from proposition twenty-seven indicate a significant trend toward the efficacy of special interest groups to influence the superintendent's viewpoint on budget matters. An excellent example of this trend is evident from the following dialogue:

Interviewer: Are you considering any cutbacks in teachers for next year?



Respondent: Well, I made an effort to hold the line on adding special education teachers; however, a group of parents with children in over-crowded classes convinced the board president to have me add more staff. The ironic aspect of the whole matter is that we are going ahead with cutbacks in physical education and art.

A number of the respondents made a point of clarifying their responses by such comments as: "If the community is willing to pay for the extras then I think our decision is clear." "I would never think of cutting back our sports program; we have a booster's club that expects the board to give additional funds for athletics next year." "You must listen to any and all groups in the community when you are developing the tentative budget, if nothing more they can give the administration some direction."

From the respondents' comments and responses to the proposition it seems that attempts are being made by superintendents to elicit the feelings of special interest groups in their formulation of the budget.

Summary Table for Hypothesis II

	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	UNDECIDED	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
Proposition 4 (Points +18)	(6) 27%	(11) 50%	(0)	(5) 23%	(0)
Proposition 6 (Points -13)	(0)	(4) 18%	(4) 18%	(11) 50%	(3) 14%
Proposition 16 (Points +13)	(5) 23%	(10) 45%	(0)	(7) 32%	(0)
Proposition 27 (Points +23)	(5) 22%	(15) 69%	(0)	(2) 9%	(0)

### Summary and Analysis

The idea of pressure group involvement in the operation of schools has been a concern expressed by many school administrators this past decade. In a school district where a community pressure group has reached a position of domination, the superintendent's role becomes one of service to this group's interest.

It seems from the evidence produced so far in this study that quite often the school boards and more frequently the superintendents are spending considerable time listening to the demands of community pressure groups. While problems may not necessarily be resolved, responses of this kind greatly reduce the threat of public confrontation that might occur were these venting mechanisms not available.

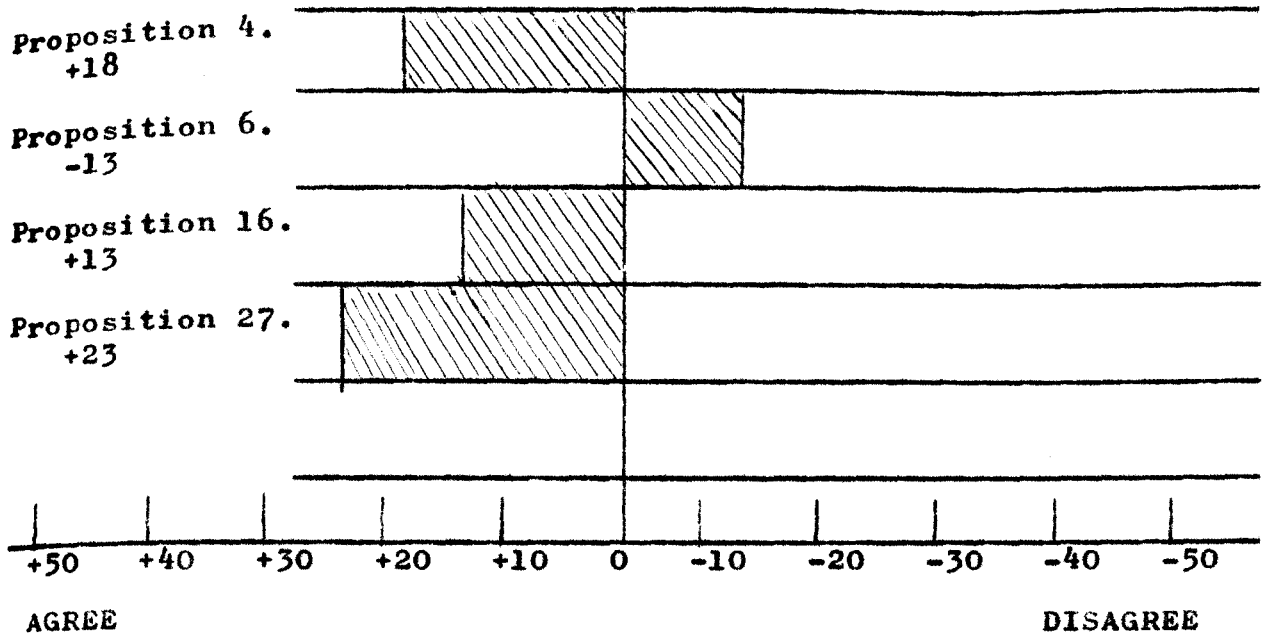
Almost every community has a myriad of organizations. If one of these organizations, no matter how low its status, decides to move in a certain direction, it can bring influence to bear on the parties involved. This fact does not mean that the existence of one or two active organizations can mobilize still other groups into a cohesive force. Rather, their presence calls for able leadership from those in charge of the schools. Frequently it is the superintendent who acts to mute these organizations and their attempts to influence school board decisions. As one respondent said,

The superintendent in this community needs to have a lot of political ability and good balance. He must be diplomatic. He must be knowledgeable. I mean, there are certain factors that go to make up a person that the community will recognize as a leader. We have just so much money to spend. We have a budget and quite often you get some group that wants more than its share. It takes quite a bit of diplomacy to sit down with the various groups and explain to them why they may have to wait a year or so.

The tendency of the superintendent to be more perceptive of the actions of community groups and their implication on modifying his administrative behavior has been evidenced by the literature cited in this research. The respondents are fully aware of their vulnerable position as superintendents. Moreover, they are dependent on the community to support the mushrooming costs of education. They also realize that the productivity of the educational enterprise is difficult to measure in any quantitative sense; there is really no profit and loss statement to fall back on. One criterion the community uses to measure the quality of the educational product may therefore be the image and leadership style of the chief school official. Under such circumstances the administrator with career ambitions may shy away from any confrontation that could cause his dismissal.

Finally, it seems wherever one finds a school board which is dominated by a pressure group the superintendent will act as an agent of this group.

### SUMMARY GRAPH FOR HYPOTHESIS II



- Proposition 4. Superintendents should actively seek support of community pressure groups in the passage of tax and bond issues.
- Proposition 6. Superintendents should elicit the support and advice of community pressure groups in the formulation of the school district budget.
- Proposition 16. Boards of Education must negotiate with community pressure groups.
- Proposition 27. Superintendents should pay attention to budget matters which reflect the interests of community pressure groups.

### Hypothesis II

The superintendent's perception of organized community pressure groups is a positive influence on his financial administration of the school district.

The implication here is that superintendents are influenced in decisions related to the financial aspect of school operations by community pressure groups.

The responses to this hypothesis were dispersed somewhat evenly along the continuum (see summary table p. 64). The reason for this scatter appears to be the results of smaller districts having more involvement of community groups in school matters than the larger districts. In smaller districts, superintendents show a tendency to seek the attitudes of groups on the financial administration of the schools. In larger school districts there seems to be an organizational insulation existing between the superintendent and community pressure groups. There was, however, significant indication among the majority of superintendents that they were interested in knowing the opinions of community pressure groups on the financial administration of the educational program.

Taxpayers are demanding greater accountability on the management of school funds; numerous tax and bond issues are being defeated due to this attitude. Many communities are taking a serious look at the cost versus quality aspects of the schools' programs. There is little doubt that this non-supportive

attitude of the community has made for significant concerns which superintendents must cope with. The perceptions that community pressure groups may have in these matters undoubtedly can influence individuals and possibly other groups on the financial dealings of the schools.

Responses did indicate that superintendents and boards of education are more agreeable in today's climate to accepting support from community pressure groups, especially in matters of tax and bond issues. Further evidence gave some support to the view that superintendents are influenced on their tentative budget plans by community pressure groups.

In light of the data presented, Hypothesis II is accepted. Superintendents are well aware of the ability that power groups may have in influencing support of the schools and their programs. School officials are becoming aware of the many organizations in their communities and the power and influence which they can generate. If any of these organizations make an effort in a non-supportive direction toward the schools, they are bound to influence the parties involved with the schools as well as others in the community. The risk of this influence on the financial management of the schools should be taken seriously and used constructively to support the financial operation.

No longer can superintendents hope to manipulate and direct the financial aspects of the educational process through their dealings only with the boards of education. Current trends

signal a need for greater community participation if financial support is expected. Superintendents must pay closer attention to the involvement of community forces as an important phase of this process.

### Hypothesis III

The superintendent is influenced positively by community pressure groups in the development and implementation of personnel policies in the school district.

Hypothesis III attempts to explore the respondents' personnel practices as related to the hiring of professional staff. The attitude and personal feelings the superintendent exhibits in relationship to his perception of the influences that the community may exercise are also examined.

As an organizational structure, schools can be classified as open rather than closed systems. Community institutions continually interact with the school social system. The fact that parents have attended schools gives them a certain degree of "expertise" on school matters. Contrast this arrangement with the closed structure of either the medical or legal profession and the potential personnel problems which could be generated in an open system can be readily understood.

The influence of mass society, of highly vocal individuals, of the increasing organization and militancy of teachers, and of other self-interested groups leads to situations in which almost all superintendents may have to use tactics of "Machiavellian" design.

There is agreement in the literature that the superintendent should be the major decision-maker in the employment or dismissal of school district employees. His role also is that of advisor and consultant to the board in all matters related to personnel. Further, he should make recommendations and list alternatives to the board of education upon which they may act in these areas. Some shifting of this responsibility directly to the local sub-communities is gaining in popularity, especially in large urban centers. It is not uncommon to observe in cities like Chicago, New York, Los Angeles, and St. Louis candidates being interviewed for administrative positions by school-community organizations. Propositions five, nine, twenty-one, twenty-three, and twenty-four deal with this hypothesis. It should be noted that the sample for this study was confined to suburban communities.

#### Proposition 5

Superintendents should seek candidates for teaching vacancies from community pressure groups.

SA	A	U	D	SD
(0)	(1) 4%	(0)	(14) 64%	(7) 32%

(Total points received -34)

Only one respondent indicated agreement with proposition five. Twenty-one of respondents were in disagreement with the proposition. A significant number of the superintendents felt



that they should seek the "best qualified candidates." One added, "If you start playing that game you are in for some difficult times." The superintendents were quite strong in their reactions on this issue. For example:

Interviewer: Is there any situation in which you would consider hiring a teacher who is a member of a community pressure group which has been critical of you or the board of education?

Respondent: As I said before, I'm not about to give the enemy aid and comfort. Besides, my position is clear; we recruit the best candidates we can. If this person is negative toward our policies, why should we hire her to work in this school district? If she feels that strong about the issue, I suggest she run for the board at the April election.

Interviewer: Have any committee groups suggested that you seek candidates from their ranks?

Respondent: Only in one case and we set the record straight on that. They claimed I had hired an unqualified teacher who should be replaced. A candidate was suggested by these parties. Upon checking her credentials we found she was not certified to teach. By the way, the person they said was not qualified is presently a principal in the district.

The one respondent who did feel agreeable to the idea of seeking candidates from special interest groups qualified his response, "It doesn't mean you have to hire them just because you seek applicants from their ranks."

### Proposition 9

Superintendent's personnel hiring practices should reflect the desires of community pressure groups.

SA	A	U	D	SD
0	(5) 23%	(2) 9%	(8) 36%	(7) 32%

(Total points received -17)

The data from this proposition reflect a more agreeable attitude by the respondents in at least attempting to meet some of the demands made by these groups. Approximately twenty-three percent of the superintendents indicated a desire to satisfy community pressure groups, if at all possible, by means of their hiring practices. There was, however, general dissatisfaction in allowing a superintendent to be influenced by the interests of these groups in his personnel practices. An interesting segment of dialogue taken from one of the interviews gives additional insight.

Interviewer: Do you feel that the board of education attempts to influence you in your personnel hiring practices?

Respondent: There are times when some board members have inquired about my reasons for not hiring so and so because he had heard from the president of the local P.T.A. that she was just a fantastic teacher and couldn't understand why she was not acceptable. I've always been candid and open to board members in matters of this nature. Usually these types want all kinds of special considerations like hours, time off, etcetera. You can't run a school district effectively by allowing that.

Generally speaking the superintendents are hesitant to allow themselves to be influenced in personnel practices by outside forces. It may set an example from which they cannot retreat or change direction.

Proposition 22

Superintendents should involve lay citizen groups in the selection of all administrative staff.

SA	A	U	D	SD
0	(3) 9%	0	(11) 50%	(9) 41%

(Total points received -26)

As a group, superintendents expressed strong disagreement with allowing citizens' groups to be involved with selection of administrators. A general consensus was "I don't have the confidence in their abilities to select the best qualified people." "You're just creating more problems by using that approach." "It's the superintendent's job to screen candidates and then for the board of education to make the selection."

One of the superintendents did share his experiences in which he used a citizen's committee to screen candidates for a principal's vacancy.

The committee was made up of a typical cross-section of the community. A number of individuals represented special interests and a few had an "ax to grind." The board wanted to make the community feel they were involved so I went along with the game. The results were wild. I found my role as being one of "peace-maker", rather than consultant and advisor of the group. They just could not agree on any point. Finally the board and I took the lead by appointing the assistant principal to the vacancy. In the future we must spell out the role for these committees very carefully.

Proposition 23

Superintendents should involve lay citizens in the selection of teachers.

SA	A	U	D	SD
0	0	(1) 4%	(11) 50%	(10) 46%

(Total points received -35)

The feeling on this proposition by the respondents was definitely against involvement of any groups in the selection of teachers. It seems from the data presented that superintendents are more agreeable to accepting group involvement in the selection of administrators than in the selection of teachers. An undercurrent was observed during the interviews that reflected an attitude of strong opposition to having anyone except the professional staff select teachers. A typical reaction by one of the respondents synthesized the feelings of the majority: "One primary role of the professional staff is the selection and retainment of teachers. That responsibility cannot be delegated to lay citizens."

#### Proposition 24

Superintendents should involve lay citizens' groups in the selection of non-certified district employees.

SA	A	U	D	SD
(0)	(0)	(1) 4%	(11) 50%	(10) 46%

(Total points received -35)

All the respondents disagreed or were undecided on proposition twenty-four. The propositions used to test hypothesis

III have been consistent in showing a negative trend in utilizing community groups for selection of staff. The above proposition makes an attempt to find out if the respondents' attitude on non-certified personnel selection is consistent to their feelings on certified staff selection where community groups are involved.

The attitude of superintendents is that if they are to maintain their leadership position in the schools there can be minimum compromise in allowing outside groups to be involved in staff selection at any level. However, a significant number of respondents stressed a need to communicate with the total community concerning the direction desired by the community in matters of personnel selection. Quite a bit of emphasis was placed on the importance of communication with community groups before selection of lay people was completed. All respondents indicated that community participation was best handled in the above fashion. Strategies suggested such as the following were found acceptable to the respondents as means by which superintendents could communicate personnel practices:

1. Newsletter
2. Board Reports on Radio and T.V.
3. Exchange forum
4. Speaker's Bureau
5. Guest speakers at community group meetings
6. Involvement in community organizations by administrative staff.

Summary Table for Hypothesis III

	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	UNDECIDED	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
Proposition 5 (Points -34)	(0)	(1) 4%	(0)	(14) 64%	(7) 32%
Proposition 9 (Points -17)	(0)	(5) 23%	(2) 9%	(8) 36%	(7) 32%
Proposition 22 (Points -26)	(0)	(3) 9%	(0)	(11) 50%	(9) 41%
Proposition 23 (Points -35)	(0)	(0)	(1) 4%	(11) 50%	(10) 46%
Proposition 24 (Points -33)	(0)	(0)	(1) 4%	(11) 50%	(10) 46%

Summary and Analysis

The respondents, on the whole, were in disagreement with all the propositions relating to the third hypothesis.

Two premises are evident in the reactions to hypothesis III: (1) Superintendents are not ready to allow lay citizens' involvement in the selection of staff unless there is a well-defined role specified before their participation. Also, the lay citizen must be relegated to a role which will not permit him to by-pass the superintendent's authority. (2) The best means by which to have participation of community groups in these matters is by the media of communication; this can be accomplished in a variety of ways. (see proposition twenty-four, p. 76).

It is imperative that superintendents maintain a leadership role in the selection of staff. Relinquishing any of his authority to outside interest groups can seriously hinder his leadership image in the school community.

In his interaction with community influentials, the superintendent must adhere to a high level of communication. The strategy of keeping these groups informed of board of education policies and programs is an excellent means of negating their potential desire to become directly involved in educational matters.

The superintendents' operating characteristics should contain the variables of confidence and trust in his abilities to interact effectively before he commits to this strategy. The information gathered during the interviews allows some concern about the strength of this style if employed by a minority of the respondents.

Superintendents must strengthen their verbal skills and understanding of group dynamics as essential needs if they are to maintain their leadership role in public education. The interviewer sensed that a number of the respondents were giving priority to studying means by which they could effectively interact with these groups without hindering the efficient operation of the schools.

More than half the respondents admitted that they were concerned about increasing community activity on personnel

matters. The general attitude of superintendents can be illustrated by the following comment:

Parents are the worst people to involve in staff selection. Yet, I find myself giving into the pressure that they extend on the board or me directly. I'm getting fed up with defending some teachers I know that these groups are absolutely correct about. They don't know it, but we happen to agree on most of the same teachers.

It appears that superintendents view the responsibility of staff selection as belonging primarily to the administration and board of education.

It may be concluded from the data presented that the respondents seem more agreeable to allowing community involvement in the selection of administrators than they are in the selection of teaching staff. This may imply the importance that respondents place on middle management people being able to effectively interact with community groups. This procedure of citizen involvement does constitute a screening of this characteristic in candidates for administrative positions.

The summary graph for Hypothesis III appears on the following page.

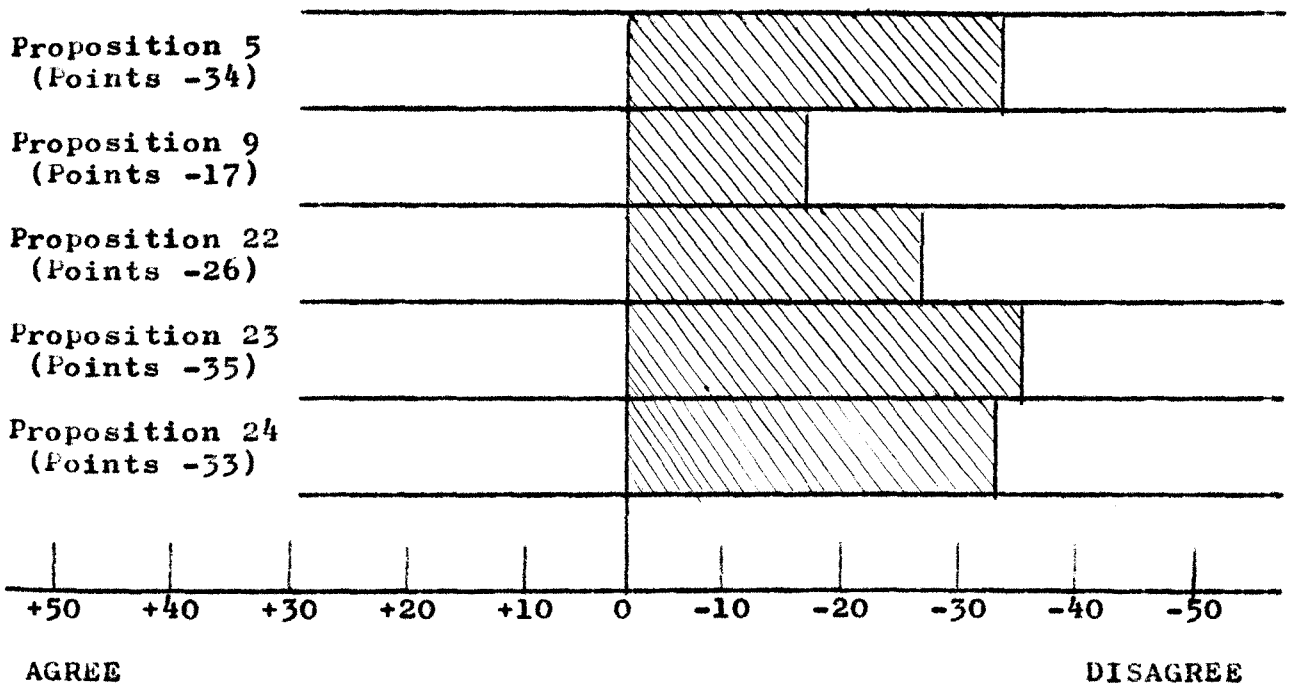
Proposition 5. Superintendents should seek candidates for teaching vacancies from community pressure groups.

Proposition 9. The superintendent's personnel hiring practices should reflect the desires of community pressure groups.



- Proposition 22. Superintendents should involve lay citizen groups in the selection of all administrative staff.
- Proposition 23. Superintendents should involve lay citizens in the selection of teachers.
- Proposition 24. Superintendents should involve lay citizen groups in the selection of non-certified school district employees.

#### SUMMARY GRAPH FOR HYPOTHESIS III



#### Hypothesis III

The superintendent is influenced positively by community pressure groups in the development and implementation of personnel policies in the school district.

The intent of this hypothesis is to explore the degree of influence that pressure groups have on the personnel practices of superintendents. There is considerable agreement in the literature that a major responsibility of the superintendent is to oversee the personnel procedures in a school district. From the responses made by the superintendents there is little evidence for acceptance of Hypothesis III. Superintendents are of the opinion that decisions relating to any personnel should be made by them or a professional staff member assigned that responsibility. It is the superintendent's role to advise and recommend to the board of education necessary procedures for dismissal or retention of all staff members. Superintendents are not in favor of compromising their responsibility in this area for the sake of relaxing possible conflicts with pressure groups. There was a strong feeling that any participation of community groups in this area of the school program could cause major problems for the board of education and the staff.

It is of interest to note that some superintendents were agreeable to allowing community participation in the election of middle management personnel. The rationale of this attitude indicates that superintendents feel a need for prospective principals to be able to interact effectively and judiciously with community members. The principalship today must give importance to the art of communications with the public sector.

Superintendents may view this strategy as a means of selecting the best candidate for the job.

Moreover, superintendents must be cognizant of community values in their personnel-hiring practices. There was some agreement that community values and attitudes should be reflected when possible in selecting prospective employees. However, the majority of superintendents were seeking the best possible candidates regardless of any other variables mentioned.

It seems imperative that superintendents maintain a leadership role in selection of staff. There is, however, a need to communicate personnel practices and procedures with the community. Utilizing community members and groups in an advisory capacity cannot help but foster a higher level of understanding between the school and community.

With more and more emphasis being made of teacher militancy and the higher salaries of teachers, an offsetting strategy would be some form of community participation at least on an advisory capacity in these matters.

There is a need for superintendents to build a confidence and trust in their leadership abilities. Strengthening their verbal skills and understanding the human potential of others can be worthwhile steps in that direction. Effective decision-making calls for a self-image that is free from fear of attack by others. Constructive criticism can become a viable tool in the hands of self-confident people. The leadership role

calls for decision-making to take place. Educators not exercising their decision-making authority will eventually lose this power to others within the community.

Although hypothesis III was rejected by the superintendents there was an indication from the data presented that the attitudes and values of the community are important considerations in the personnel practices of school administrators.

#### Hypothesis IV

The superintendent will perceive organized community pressure groups as having a positive influence on the rate and direction of change in the school district.

The hypothesis implies that superintendents will be influenced by community pressure groups relative to their operation of the school district.

Floyd Hunter's research has had a profound influence on the study of community power.<sup>6</sup> Hunter, using the nomination-reputational method, obtained over 175 names of persons who were prominent in community affairs. A special study was made of this group's influence on a number of community agencies including the schools. Hunter constructed a power pyramid from the sample through interviews of these influentials. Hunter postulated that knowledge of this power pyramid and its existence influences school agencies in the community to direct their activities toward a non-conflict position. Other studies

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<sup>6</sup>Floyd Hunter, op. cit., p. 91.

by Dahl<sup>7</sup> and Rossi<sup>8</sup> are in agreement with Hunter's position.

For the school administrator this simple dictum has some real value. First of all, it will permit him to think through his own school district and its power environment. Also, it will assist to identify his community more precisely for the planning of strategy and change.

This hypothesis, then, attempts to ascertain if superintendents practice a systematic appraisal of community pressure groups and their potential power in influencing the administrative decision-making processes.

#### Proposition 7

The power of the superintendents will diminish if they allow community pressure groups to become involved in school matters.

SA	A	U	D	SD
0	(2) 9%	(2) 9%	(14) 64%	(4) 18%

(Total points received -20)

The majority of respondents feel that involvement of community pressure groups in school matters will not diminish their power position as superintendents. Common reactions such

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<sup>7</sup>Robert A. Dahl, "A Critique of the Ruling Elite Model," American Political Science Review, LII (June, 1961), pp. 463-69.

<sup>8</sup>Peter Rossi, Social Science and Community Action (East Lansing: Board of Trustees, Michigan State University, 1968), pp. 22-23.

as: "The best way to understand the needs of others is to at least listen to their demands." "You should involve them in the process of education at some level." "Realistic involvement of community groups in school matters is a necessary fact of life." "It's good sense to encourage their involvement, you then have a better opportunity to channel their energy toward constructive processes."

It seems that the respondents sense the urgency of some level of community involvement in school matters. The question that may be difficult to answer is just how much participation of these groups is beneficial? Superintendents, however, do not seem to feel that these groups will cause a loss of their authority or their leadership in the operation of the schools.

### Proposition 13

The superintendent's leadership role will be directly related to his ability to control the influence of community pressure groups on the schools.

SA		A		U		D		SD
(3)	14%	(6)	27%	(3)	14%	(10)	45%	(0)

(Total points received +2)

The respondents are somewhat divided on their responses to proposition thirteen. Some superintendents felt that their role did not dictate their exerting a control over community pressure groups. A minority were of the opinion that their leadership role would be influenced by the activities of

community groups. Analysis of the data indicates that some superintendents may have "side-stepped" a direct answer to the question. The word control was a negative notion to the respondents who disagreed with the proposition. However, in their interaction with the interviewer a number of the respondents did state that some groups could influence the board of education and therefore, indirectly have an effect on the superintendent's leadership role.

#### Proposition 20

Boards of education should devote time at their regular meetings to interact with community pressure groups.

SA		A		U		D		SD
(1)	4%	(16)	74%	(1)	4%	(3)	18%	(0)

(Total points received +14)

Most respondents felt it was important to have a clear understanding between community groups and the board of education. One respondent remarked, "Any individual or group has a right to express his feelings to the board as long as it is in keeping with board procedure."

From the standpoint of attitude, a majority of the superintendents felt that any individual or group had the right to address the board on matters pertaining to the schools as long as it was in keeping with school board policy. In addition, there seems to be an honest commitment by the respondents to

encourage boards of education to devote time at their meetings to at least listen to the issues and interact with the community groups that may present them.

Proposition 26

Superintendents should not join or participate in community organizations which may influence the schools.

SA	A	U	D	SD
(0)	(0)	(0)	(18) 82%	(4) 18%

(Total points received -26)

It is evident from the responses on proposition twenty-six that the superintendents are of the opinion that they should not restrict themselves in joining community organizations which may influence the schools. A significant majority of the superintendents were members of service organizations in their respective communities. In addition, many held power positions in church and fraternal clubs that conceivably could influence the schools. It was the general consensus of the groups that it was strictly their own business if they desired to participate in community organizations. There seemed to be a feeling among the majority that their interests outside of school affairs were generally of no concern to the board of education. Some respondents did qualify their answers in the following manner: "I should use common sense in deciding which clubs or groups I should join;" "My board feels I should participate actively in some service organization;" "It's good administrative strategy



to be a part of the community power structure."

Proposition 31

Involvement of community pressure groups in school affairs will cause morale problems with the teachers.

SA	A	U	D	SD
(0)	(0)	(1) 6%	(19) 82%	(2) 12%

(Total points received -22)

It is of interest to note that the data from this proposition support Halliday's findings<sup>9</sup> as reported in Chapter II.

The majority opinion of respondents concludes that pressure group involvement does not necessarily cause morale problems with staff. It was reported, however, that in cases where their activities may question the decision-making authority of professional staff a negative reaction may occur.

Superintendents, in general, are aware that they must maintain a network of interpersonal relationships with these groups. (1) They need feedback for recommendations and decisions. (2) They see a need to have these groups develop a trust and confidence in their administrative ability. The promotion of community pressure group participation at levels which are not disruptive to the educational climate in the schools may be an effective means of reaching those goals.

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<sup>9</sup>Halliday, op. cit., p. 21.

Superintendents are cognizant of the public's demands for more accountability in the schools. Strategies must therefore be developed to educate community groups on the pitfalls which may occur if their participation in school affairs is unrealistic in design.

One respondent's comment reflects the general attitude of superintendents toward proposition thirty-one.

With the advent of accountability and taxpayer revolt, I feel it is most urgent that we involve community groups in suitable support areas of the decision-making process. I have confidence that education is still the priority of most publics. I also think that the majority of my professional staff understand the need for legitimate involvement of these groups in school matters.

Summary Table for Hypothesis IV

	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	UNDECIDED	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
Proposition 7 (Points -20)	(0)	(2) 9%	(2) 64%	(14) 64%	(4) 18%
Proposition 13 (Points -2)	(3) 14%	(6) 27%	(3) 14%	(10) 45%	(0)
Proposition 20 (Points +14)	(1) 4%	(16) 74%	(1) 4%	(3) 18%	(0)
Proposition 26 (Points -26)	(0)	(0)	(0)	(18) 82%	(4) 18%
Proposition 31 (Points -23)	(0)	(0)	(1) 6%	(19) 82%	(2) 18%

Summary and Analysis

The data reveal a movement by superintendents toward a more eclectic approach in their perception of the influence of

community groups on the operation of the educational program. Some superintendents stated that they encourage community participation because it is a vital aspect of the school official's role.

Respondents view their position as getting the community to feel a responsibility for supporting the schools. There is a need for professionals and lay citizens to re-examine their mutual obligations and their means for working together. Neither lay citizens nor professionals can make their total contribution to education unless they are sensitive to and trusting of each other's desires and capabilities. An important step in this direction is for superintendents to acknowledge both the boundaries of their own expertise and their ultimate accountability to the public.

Roald Campbell and Associates Cunningham, McPhee, and Nystrand stress the need for superintendents to not remove themselves from the politics of the community. "Since educators and their supporters are competing for the resources of the community, they must allow participation of community groups as a necessary step in this process."<sup>10</sup>

Author H. Eliot put it another way.

Because school districts are governmental units and the voters have ultimate responsibility, school board

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<sup>10</sup>Roald F. Campbell, Luvern L. Cunningham, Radenick F. McPhee, and Raphael O. Nystrand, The Organization and Control of American Schools (Columbus, Ohio: Charles E. Merrill Publishing Company, 1970), p. 364.

members and school superintendents are engaged in political activity whether they like it or not. The standard professional terminology for this - a semantic triumph - is 'community relations.' Why not say frankly that he must be skilled in community relations. Why not say therefore that he must be a good politician?<sup>11</sup>

Superintendents are governmental decision-makers, and the effort to gain or keep the power to make those decisions may well rest with their abilities to cope with community pressure groups.

The respondents are in agreement with the literature on the need for the involvement of these groups in school matters. A number of candid remarks from the superintendents illustrate this attitude.

Interviewer: What strategies have you employed in dealing with community pressure groups which have proven successful?

Respondent: The name of the game is public relations as much as I don't like to admit it. Therefore, you must involve yourself in their activities and also allow their participation in school activities. It's important to be sincere in your efforts - so you should allow them to advise on decisions and board policy.

Another superintendent remarked, "I used to be concerned about too much community activity in the schools, however, today we have a volunteer program which has over fifty parents and four community groups working in our schools."

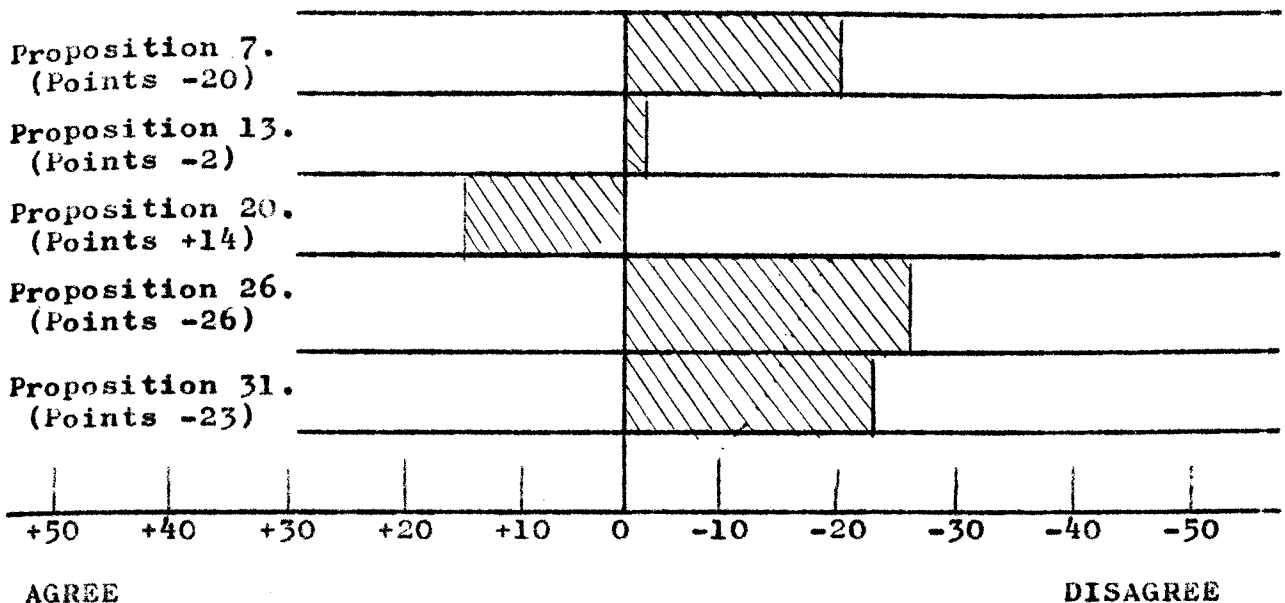
All of the propositions used to test hypothesis IV indicate that a sensitivity does exist in the respondents'

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<sup>11</sup>Thomas H. Eliot, "Toward an Understanding of Public Politics," The American Political Science Review, LIII, No. 4 (December, 1959), p. 135.

perception of community pressure groups and their influence on the rate and direction of change that may take place in a school district.

### SUMMARY GRAPH FOR HYPOTHESIS IV



Proposition 7. The power of the superintendents will diminish if they allow community pressure groups to become involved in school matters.

Proposition 13. The superintendent's leadership role will be directly related to his ability to control the influence of community pressure groups on the school.

Proposition 20. Boards of education should devote time at their regular meetings to interact with community pressure groups.

Proposition 26. Superintendents should not join or participate in community organizations which may influence the schools.

Proposition 31. Involvement of community pressure groups in school affairs will cause morale problems with teachers.

#### Hypothesis IV

The superintendent will perceive organized community pressure groups as having a positive influence on the rate and direction of change in the school district.

The fourth hypothesis involves the superintendent's attitude on the degree of influence that community pressure groups have on the movement toward change in a school district. On the basis of the data presented this hypothesis is accepted.

The power position of the superintendent is directly related to his ability to channel community pressure group activities to a supportive position on school matters. School officials are sensing the urgency of meeting the demands of community pressure groups on numerous school operations. One solution may be to appease the demands of the more vocal groups realizing, however, that this strategy may cause a loss of prestige and authority in the superintendency. A more practical approach could be a commitment to a broad spectrum of communicative techniques which can elicit attitudes and opinions of the community before decisions are formulated. A majority of the

superintendents are giving more attention to public relation procedures as methods of sampling community opinions of the schools. A number of these techniques are reported on page 117 of this study.

Superintendents must pay particular attention to the power influentials in their communities as a means of perceiving conflicts that may occur. There are times when it is more advantageous to compromise a position as a strategy for gaining support in more important matters. Superintendents taking a "tunnel view" on issues or conflicts that may arise with community pressure groups may eventually find themselves dominated by these same groups. A longitudinal attitude which stresses the long term needs of the schools is the form of leadership style which can effectively manage the demands of special interest groups.

As the community increases its participation in the affairs of the schools it will necessitate a more eclectic approach being taken by the superintendent. Further, an attitude of mutual trust and understanding must exist between the schools and their communities before any effective benefits will be derived from this arrangement.

#### Hypothesis V

The superintendent perceives organized pressure groups to be of positive influence on his leadership role.

The intent of the above hypothesis is to find out if the superintendent's leadership role is influenced by community pressure groups, and if so, in what way does it affect his role? The propositions used to test the hypothesis were designed to create responses which might give insight into his leadership role.

Lipham<sup>12</sup> views leadership as causing some changes in goals, programs, and/or procedures of an organization. While these changes in goals, programs, or procedures have their expression within the organization, they are affected by a larger organization - the community. Thus, the educator is required to stimulate his staff as well as to convince the public of the benefits to be derived by following his leadership. If a superintendent succeeds directly, indirectly, personally, or with the help of others in getting some change of position on the part of staff or public, he will have exerted some leadership. The operational strategy that is employed to influence these groups is then, the important question to be answered in the analysis of the data. Propositions ten, fourteen, seventeen, and twenty-eight will provide the data to test this thesis.

#### Proposition 10

Superintendents should have an "open door" policy in dealing with community pressure groups.

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<sup>12</sup>James M. Lipham, "Leadership and Administration," Behavioral Science and Educational Administration (National Society for the Study of Education), Sixty-third Yearbook, Part II (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1964), Chapter VI.



SA	A	U	D	SD
(9) 41%	(12) 55%	(0)	(1) 4%	(0)

(Total points received +29)

Proposition twenty-nine data are significantly in favor of superintendents interacting with any and all groups, even though their demands may be of special interest or might involve criticism of the schools. The attitude of the respondents focused on a need for all governmental agencies to at least listen to the needs, interests, and demands of their publics. "The chief school administrator must have available, to him, sources within the community from which to poll opinions on the programs of the schools." "You enhance your ability to plan and implement programs by hearing all sides of the issue," were remarks scattered throughout the respondents' reactions. One respondent was most concerned about developing an atmosphere with an "open door" policy which might negate his leadership role, therefore, he disagreed with the proposition. The majority opinion does reflect a movement by superintendents to pay more attention to procedures by which they may interact with community groups and power influentials.

#### Proposition 14

Community pressure groups should be given scheduled time at Board of Education meetings to discuss issues related to the schools.

SA	A	U	D	SD
(4) 18%	(17) 77%	(1) 5%	(0)	(0)
(Total points received +25)				

Further support seems to be indicated by the data in proposition fourteen for a high level of communication between governmental agencies and special interest groups. As board of education members and superintendents are increasingly confronted with proposals and demands for change, they are becoming aware that the school board meeting can become an effective means of negating misinformation and misinterpretation of board plans and motives through a process of democratic communication. The side effect of this strategy may be an increasing participation and influence of these community groups on the board of education and superintendent.

A respondent remarked during the interview on the importance of procedure being well-defined before boards of education committed themselves to such tactics. The February 1972 issue of Phi Delta Kappan reports a variety of devices being adopted by school districts to improve communication.<sup>13</sup>

Examples given were: telephone answering service to give residents up to date information on board of education action, spot news announcements on radio and television giving summaries of actions being taken by school boards, weekly

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<sup>13</sup>Phi Delta Kappan, "Keeping the Public Informed" (February, 1972), p. 395.

newspaper column written by school officials about educational activities and policies of the schools. There does seem to be greater encouragement by the schools to welcome, even urge, more community involvement in school board meetings. It was reported by one superintendent that his board of education makes it a point to compress routine business and to permit more discussion and community participation.

#### Proposition 17

The superintendent's job security is directly related to his ability to deal effectively with community pressure groups' activities.

SA	A	U	D	SD
(7) 31%	(15) 69%	(0)	(0)	(0)

(Total points received +29)

All the superintendents feel that their job security is related to their ability to deal effectively with community pressure groups. If there is anyone who is constantly "on the spot," it is the superintendent. One mis-statement or error in judgment on his part can give the community the necessary vehicle by which to discredit his leadership.

Most superintendents surveyed believed their role in dealing with these groups was to make certain they had adequate background information on the issues, and to act as a clarifier of concerns they might have. The superintendents were of the opinion that to keep community groups under control was a

difficult task unless they were allowed some degree of participation in school matters. The following illustration may serve to clarify the majority attitude reflected.

Interviewer: Have you had any community groups disagree with your decisions or point of view on educational issues?

Respondent: This is my third superintendency in the past twelve years. I'll be quite candid with you - I lost the previous positions because of attacks on my policy and philosophy of dealing with students. One of my short-comings was the possible mistake I made about the influence these people had on board members. I guess with age comes maturity. I've learned to have a more pliable attitude toward these matters. There is little doubt, in my particular case anyway, that community groups can affect job security.

It could be concluded that superintendents who give a high priority to job security may be more susceptible to community group influence.

#### Proposition 28

Superintendents should involve community pressure groups in a constructive manner in all aspects of the school program.

SA	A	U	D	SD
(0)	(10) 45%	(3) 14%	(9) 41%	(0)

(Total points received +1)

The respondents were somewhat evenly divided on their responses to proposition twenty-eight. The superintendents who were in disagreement felt that the phrase "all aspects of the school program" was not acceptable. Comments by this group of

respondents stressed the many pitfalls in this approach to community participation, for example: "It is difficult to avoid confrontation if you follow that reasoning." "I don't think you can control their influence once you go all the way on participation." "There are legitimate situations for community involvement, however, not in all aspects of the school program."

Respondents in agreement with proposition twenty-eight felt that residents have the right and responsibility to share in decisions that may affect their children. The prevailing attitude here was to strive for a cooperative sharing of the educational process. A good many of these school administrators seem to feel that by allowing more involvement of lay citizens they may be able to ease the financial crises on the educational program. The following remarks support the above statement:

"Encouraging citizen involvement in school affairs was a positive factor in the passage of our last tax increase." "If you expect community support for more spending, then they should be a part of the total decision making process." "In times like these parents want to be involved in more than just the financial support of education."

No clear decision can be reached on the respondents' rationale from the data presented. It does seem, however, that respondents giving priority to the financial needs of their schools are more inclined to accept increasing community pressure group involvement in school programs.

Superintendents giving priority to internal matters are less apt to involve community groups significantly in major aspects of the school program.

Summary Table for Hypothesis V

	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	UNDECIDED	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
Proposition 10 (Points +29)	(9) 41%	(12) 55%	(0)	(1) 4%	(0)
Proposition 14 (Points +25)	(4) 18%	(17) 77%	(1) 5%	(0)	(0)
Proposition 17 (Points +29)	(7) 31%	(15) 69%	(0)	(0)	(0)
Proposition 28 (Points +1)	(0)	(10) 45%	(3) 14%	(9) 41%	(0)

Summary and Analysis

The data collected to test Hypothesis V coincide with the opinions of prominent educators. The following quote makes light of the generally accepted position taken by prominent educators:

The differentiation between lay and professional control is frequently challenged by citizens. These challenges may grow from clear recognition that some teachers are not teaching, some pupils are not learning, or that some organizations have no capacity for adaptability. These conditions are causing an increasing number of citizens to insist on the schools being held accountable for their procedures and their results. We agree that the emphasis on professional accountability is long overdue. However, just as there is an increasing demand for professional

accountability, there is also need for citizens to be responsible participants and advocates. Citizens have an obligation to sustain and support the competent professional.<sup>14</sup>

Superintendents understand the importance of sustaining support from the community if they are to move ahead with the educational product. There is evidence from the data presented of the sincere approach being taken by many school officials to encourage community involvement in the schools. Some honest concerns were raised by a number of respondents on the degree and intensity of these involvements. Though the data are inconclusive as to the reasons or motives behind the superintendents' reactions to the propositions, speculation on the trends and implications of the findings may be warranted.

Superintendents need to develop well-defined programs of public relations. It was found during the interviews that only twenty percent of the respondents had defined community relations programs in operation. Of those reporting such programs, none had encountered any serious problems from community pressure groups. Also, their reactions to citizens and group participation in the schools was positive. It seems significant to note the administrator who would lead must also be committed to a set of values which will not be destructive to the needs of the community.

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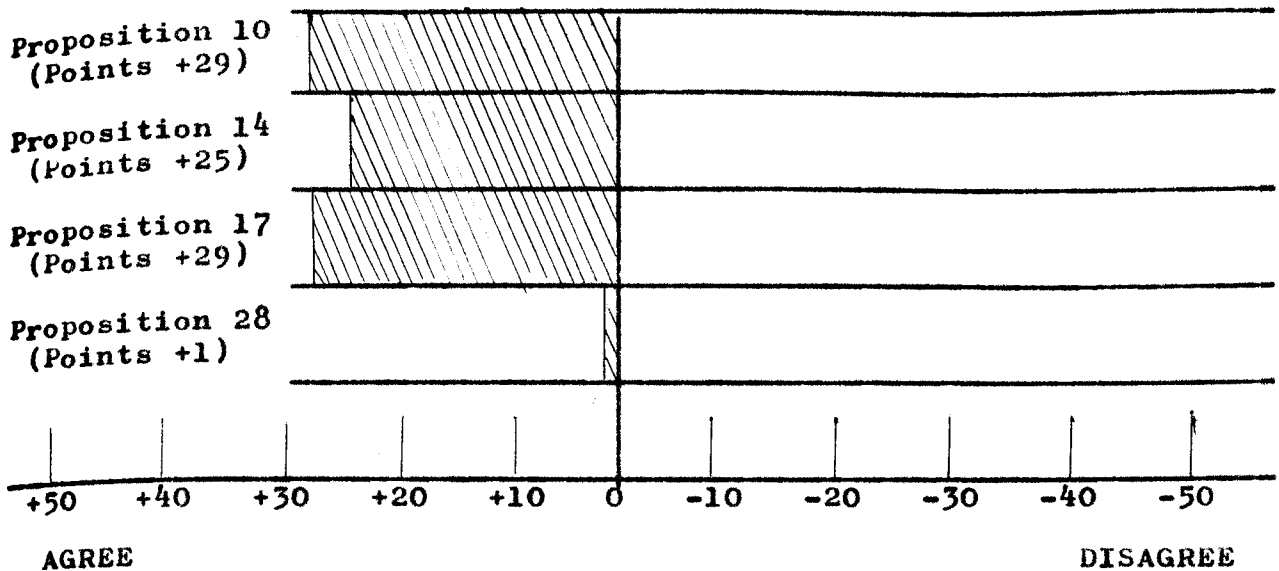
<sup>14</sup>Roald Campbell and Associates, op. cit., p. 580.

Perhaps even more important than the aforementioned is the need for school-community collaboration in developing the goals which would foster quality education for all the community members. The objectives of the school and community, if similar, could negate much of the conflict taking place in and around public education today.

Data from the interview instrument establish a trend toward greater participation of lay citizens in school affairs. If superintendents are to utilize effectively the potential resources of these citizens, a need for programs of human relations training is urgent. There seemed to be a lack of perception, on the part of some respondents, of the necessity to communicate on a continual basis with the residents and pressure groups of the community.

Of urgency then, is a need to develop models of human relations which can be theoretically and practically utilized by school officials in defining the roles of both school and community. Implications for graduate schools of education are to consider a support system which will assist in the development and implementation of these models. Courses dealing with human relations, leadership, and group dynamics should be requirements for aspiring school administrators. A number of comments from the respondents indicated a lack in their training to cope with the many factors inherent in attempting to work with the community.



SUMMARY GRAPH FOR HYPOTHESIS V

- Proposition 10. Superintendents should have an "open-door" policy in dealing with community pressure groups.
- Proposition 14. Community pressure groups should be given scheduled time at board of education meetings to discuss issues related to the schools.
- Proposition 17. Superintendent's job security is directly related to his ability to deal effectively with community pressure group activities.
- Proposition 28. Superintendents should involve community pressure groups in a constructive manner in all aspects of the school programs.

Hypothesis V

The superintendent perceives organized pressure groups to be of positive influence on his leadership role.

An analysis of the cumulative data on the responses supports this hypothesis. Only in proposition twenty-eight, which is related to involvement of community pressure groups in a constructive manner in school programs, was there some inconsistency. It can therefore be concluded that superintendents perceive organized pressure groups to be of a positive influence on their leadership role. Leadership has been defined in this study as causing some changes in goals, programs and/or procedures of an organization. Thus, educators are required to convince the community of the benefits derived by following their leadership.

It is paramount to successful leadership practices that school personnel elicit the opinions and needs of their residents. Practical leadership calls for honest dialogue between the schools and their immediate communities. The school's primary role is to meet the educational needs of the community. This can best be accomplished by implementing practices which allow individuals and groups to voice their opinions in a democratic way. Boards of education are finding that greater demands are being made by the community for a share in the decision-making process. Governmental bodies must inculcate an attitude of partnership in these matters if they expect to receive support for the educational programs.

Importance must be given to increasing the amount of interaction between the schools and the community. Emphasis

should be given to a more friendly interaction, built on a mutual confidence and trust. For the latter to be successful superintendents must consider their public relations program as a priority item during budget formulation. There is significant need for schools to refine and update their public relations image. Some promising innovations have been reported in this study dealing with this aspect of the superintendent's role.

There is a further need for superintendents to realize the urgency for community support in these times which are characterized by heavy criticism and nonsupport of their programs. To even maintain the status quo in many school districts which are facing cutbacks of staff and programs calls for a dynamic leadership style accepting the importance of community participation in the schools.

A participating public will increase the opportunities to maximize the educational benefits to the students. Trends have been reported in this dissertation which verify a movement toward procedures stimulating greater communication between the school and community.

A practical leadership role calls for sensible involvement of the community as a means of gathering support for present and future needs of the schools. Superintendents giving a low priority to community pressure group demands may find themselves generating undue difficulties on the job. Educators must realize their own shortcomings and opinions as factors

that could become potential obstacles to a practical application of the recommendations stated in this analysis.

### Hypothesis VI

The superintendent's participative attitude allows for positive action of community pressure groups.

The important factor to be considered in analyzing hypothesis VI relates to respondents' attitudes and their effect on the actions that community pressure groups may take. Does allowing these groups free access to the schools channel their actions to a constructive end? Do leadership styles which restrict actions cause special interest groups to become destructive in nature? What types of leadership style seem to be effective in the superintendent's association and interaction with community pressure groups?

The major focus will then be to analyze the data for some possible solutions to these questions.

In any community, organizations may interact with schools in numerous ways. Often organizations are helpful; sometimes they seek to use schools for their own purposes.

Buckman researched the techniques of persuasion that were used by community or school groups in their interactions. The techniques identified are indicative of methods used by both school and community groups.

1. Let them alone.
2. Cooperate with them.

3. Ask for what we want.
4. Bring pressure through friends and supervisors.
5. Impress and thereby influence them.
6. Give them a job to do and recognition for it.
7. Tie them to regulations and "channels."
8. Bring out the voters on our side.
9. Absorb some of the leaders in the group.
10. Remove their leaders.
11. Stage a slowdown.
12. Dictate to them; lay down the law.
13. Employ sanctions.<sup>15</sup>

Community groups will have direct or indirect relations at some time with the schools; some of these relations can be potentially destructive to the educational system. It is therefore important for school superintendents to have a "card file" of strategies and movements which can channel these negative factors to constructive actions.

Propositions eight, eleven, twelve, fifteen, and twenty-nine will provide the data from which the conclusion will be drawn for Hypothesis VI.

#### Proposition 8

The superintendent can best control and utilize community pressure groups through allowing their participation in school matters.

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<sup>15</sup>Rilma O. Buckman, "Interaction Between Women's Clubs and Institutions in Greater Lafayette, Indiana" (unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, University of Chicago, 1952), p. 162.

SA	A	U	D	SD
(2) 7%	(11) 50%	(2) 6%	(7) 28%	(0)
(Total points received +9)				

The responses were somewhat scattered on this proposition although over fifty percent of the respondents were in agreement with allowing some pressure group participation. A significant number of respondents reflected the need to utilize the talents and energies of community organizations, and that any dividends received would be predicated on their participation in school matters. As one superintendent added:

Their support can assist the board if we understand that this means giving them some voice in the operation of the schools. Certainly, we should make an effort to tap their potential resources for education and youth. My job is to construct their role for active involvement on a positive basis.

Other superintendents questioned the prudence or feasibility of community participation as a control agent. For example: "In no way do I want these people running the schools," "That strategy is too big a compromise for my value structure to handle," "If you allow any involvement, expect to be influenced by their actions which are usually of a selfish interest."

It seems that the majority of responses were in favor of involvement not as a control strategy, but rather as a vehicle for their being utilized to share in the decision-making process. The influence that these groups have on education and decision-making was not clearly established from the data,

except that it was not being underestimated by the majority of the superintendents.

Some of these groups have provided beneficial support to the schools. Some examples to support this finding follow: "We would never have had the youth center in town without the support from many of these groups such as the P.T.A., Rotary, and Homeowner's Association," "Our volunteer program has saved the schools the salary of two teachers this past year; I must give recognition to the community council, without whose help we could never have done it."

Generally, there seems to be a trend toward utilization of community pressure groups rather than concern about control of their activities. The trend cited will mean that administrators anticipate more sharing of their decision-making role with others.

#### Proposition 11

Superintendents should include lay citizens as committee members when programs of curriculum innovations are being planned.

SA	A	U	D	SD
(4) 18%	(14) 64%	(1) 4%	(3) 14%	(0)

(Total points received +19)

The term "lay citizens" rather than "community pressure groups" caused some concern on the part of the respondents. The interviewer's intent was to determine if superintendents had a

more compromising attitude when reference was not made directly to special interest groups in the propositions.

There was increasingly greater support for involvement of individuals when evidence indicated that they had no special cause or interest in influencing educational decisions. It was further found that the respondents looked upon lay citizen involvement as a necessary and acceptable strategy to use when curriculum innovations were being planned. The following episode gives support to this point:

Interviewer: How have you implemented curriculum change in this district?

Respondent: An historical overview can best serve to answer that question. We have always in the past used teachers and principals to direct curriculum development here. Usually recommendations based on the committee's study and report were made to the board by me.

In the past two years the board decided to have selected parents serve on these committees. At first I was somewhat concerned about this approach. However, everything is working out quite well and it seems everybody likes the idea, even the teachers. I think our non-graded program would still be on the drawing board if we had not taken this approach.

Some respondents questioned the use of parents as participating members of curriculum committees. They seem to have a lower level of confidence and trust toward parents being able to make positive contributions in this area of school affairs. One respondent used the following line of reasoning: "I don't feel parents really understand the global attitude needed. Also, their subjective bias would be a hindrance to



any effective contribution which might be made." Still another, "Their involvement as aides, volunteers, room mothers, etcetera, would be the type of involvement I'd like to see."

The attitude of the majority was more agreeable to involvement of lay-citizens as decision-makers in curriculum. Respondents were quick to point out, however, that individuals have the same basic potential as special interest groups to hurt the schools as well as to help them. In reality it seems to make no difference if special interest groups participate as long as the board of education has set well-defined guidelines for such committees. It may be noted then that some of the respondents did not show any significant changes in attitude toward citizen involvement even though these individuals might have no association with community pressure groups.

#### Proposition 12

Superintendents should participate in community pressure group activities by means of attendance at meetings and as guest speakers.

SA	A	U	D	SD
(3) 14%	(14) 64%	(5) 23%	(0)	(0)

(Total points received +20)

It is of interest to note that respondents were in strong agreement on participation in community pressure group activities. Conversely this was (see proposition 11, p. 110) not the case. There seems to be a unilateral attitude being

taken by some superintendents on this item. It could be generalized that, by participation in community pressure group activities, superintendents might engender means of communicating school policy and programs within these groups. The literature does not support the dictum of "one way" participation on these matters. There is universal agreement that the process of communication must include a means by which all parties have the right to share in decision-making matters. Whatever the rationale may be of these respondents, they should make an attempt to evaluate their motives for such actions. If constructive and viable programs of public relations are to be workable, the schools must take the lead in developing participative plans inclusive of these groups.

#### Proposition 15

Superintendents should have the authority to decide which community pressure groups can best serve the schools and then to support their activities accordingly.

SA	A	U	D	SD
(1) 4%	(16) 74%	(1) 4%	(4) 18%	(0)

(Total points received +14)

The majority of superintendents felt that some type of control was beneficial in matters of community pressure group support.

An attitude of concern was generally shown toward extremist group activities which the respondents felt should be

restricted within the schools. (See definition of term for extremist groups, Chapter I, p. 17). One respondent remarked, "It's important to involve groups, and as far as I'm concerned, they will receive my support, unless it is found that their interest may be negative to the democratic way." Another stated "The superintendent should have the authority to support community groups which are dedicated to the welfare of the community." A third said, "I'm more concerned about the extremist elements - the left and right wing activities not being supported and encouraged by others."

Many respondents did qualify their responses by stating that support should go to all sincere groups; however, due to the many special interest group activities generated against the schools, some controls of this nature were acceptable. The guidelines for giving school support to community pressure groups should be mutually agreed upon by the Board of Education and the superintendent.

There seemed to be a general concern about the fear of extremist pressure group activities in the schools. A significant percentage of the respondents had experienced attacks by these groups in the past. A need for the development of workable strategies on behalf of the schools was evident in the types of responses made: "It's difficult to deal with this type of pressure group," "They make no sense in their demands," "How do you work with a group that never listens, only talks." "Their

tactics are unfair and hard to cope with."

An increasing concern is being reflected by school districts on these groups, especially during this period of taxpayer concern and generally unsatisfied attitude of the public with its schools. A need for establishing some guidelines in dealing with this fringe is evident from the reactions of the majority of superintendents.

Proposition 29

Superintendents should devote a considerable portion of their time to school community relations.

SA	A	U	D	SD
(7) 32%	(15) 68%	(0)	(0)	(0)

(Total points received +29)

There was total agreement that superintendents should devote considerable time to community relations. Respondents were asked to indicate the percentage of time they felt was appropriate for this endeavor. The results of this survey are reported below:

Time actually Allocated for Public Relations by Superintendents

<u>Percent of Time</u>	<u>Number</u>
75-100%	0
50-74%	5
25-49%	14
24% and below	<u>3</u>
Total	22

The majority of respondents indicated they spent approximately one-third of their time in public relations work. No superintendent reported spending less than ten percent of his time in this endeavor. Respondents were also asked about the activities in which they were involved. A list of those most commonly reported follows:

1. Speaker at P.T.A. and community organization meetings
2. Radio and T.V. interview
3. Newspaper articles
4. Written progress reports on school programs
5. Attendance at school events
6. Meetings with parent groups
7. Membership in community organizations (Rotary, Lions, Chamber of Commerce were mentioned frequently)
8. Conduct seminars on board policy with students and parents
9. Participate in charity organizations
10. Speaker at student assemblies
11. Coordinate press releases to news media
12. Work with local government on matters affecting the schools (examples giving zoning laws, sewer and water restrictions)
13. Budget hearings at community meetings.
14. Meetings with taxpayer and homeowner's associations
15. Participation in community fund-raising affairs

16. Listen to complaints of citizens and groups
17. Coordinate use of school facilities by community clubs and organizations.

Respondents were asked if they had a defined school-community relations program (See question 12, Appendix C). A majority of the superintendents reported that their program of community relations consisted mostly of activities in which they were requested to participate. A few of the respondents did state that these programs of community relations were well-defined in board policy and monthly news reports to the community.

The activities reported by the superintendents do show a trend toward their direct involvement in community activities as participants, consultants, or speakers.

Few of the respondents reported well-defined, written procedures on school-community relations activities. Yet, a significant number indicated that they were spending considerable time in these matters. It seems prudent that more attention should be paid to establishing guidelines and procedures for the implementation of public relations programs. If the community is to become a knowledgeable partner in the educational program, the expansion of the activities reported in this dissertation would be a worthwhile step in that direction.

### Analysis and Summary

Prominent educators have encouraged greater participation by school administrators and boards of education in

SUMMARY TABLE FOR HYPOTHESIS VI

	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	UNDECIDED	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
Proposition 8 (Points +9)	(2) 6%	(11) 50%	(2) 6%	(7) 27%	(0)
Proposition 11 (Points +19)	(4) 18%	(14) 64%	(1) 4%	(3) 14%	(0)
Proposition 12 (Points +20)	(3) 13%	(14) 64%	(5) 23%	(0)	(0)
Proposition 15 (Points +14)	(1) 4%	(16) 74%	(1) 4%	(4) 18%	(0)
Proposition 29 (Points +29)	(7) 32%	(15) 68%	(0)	(0)	(0)

community activities. Conversely, they have expressed a need for more involvement of these same groups in school matters which may affect the general welfare of the public.

A knowledge of the community is essential background for a successful school-community relations program. Without this knowledge any program development must be based upon assumptions that may or may not be correct.

An understanding of the community includes a knowledge of the schools, for the school is one of the institutions of the community. Questions which should be answered before any programs are initiated are: (1) What media are being used for community relations? (2) What groups exist in the community? (3) What school-community conflicts exist? (4) What resources are available for use in the program? (5) what is the

competency of school personnel to participate in the program? (6) What power structures exist in the community? (7) What are the limitations of the power structures in the community? (8) What is the socio-economic base of the community? (9) What are the strengths and weaknesses of the schools?

It seems that superintendents are employing more multi-directional communications with community pressure groups. Communication with school staff by the superintendent on various school matters is already an acceptable practice as reported by the majority of respondents.

The attitude of most superintendents is to take an active role in community activities as another means of communication and involvement of pressure groups in school matters. There is also a feeling of not controlling pressure groups, but rather utilizing their talents and energies for educational support. There is, however, a concern being voiced by the same group about the influence that can come from the extreme elements that may take advantage of this administrative position. Greater emphasis is being given to the participation of lay citizens in less mundane matters. Involvement of the public in curriculum matters is gaining favor with many school officials. There is still an element of fear being expressed by some on the feasibility of community participation in school operations. These parties should pay particular attention to the motives and reasons behind their rationale. Involvement of citizens and



groups may help facilitate a higher level of understanding and more positive action than is likely to result from ignoring their presence.

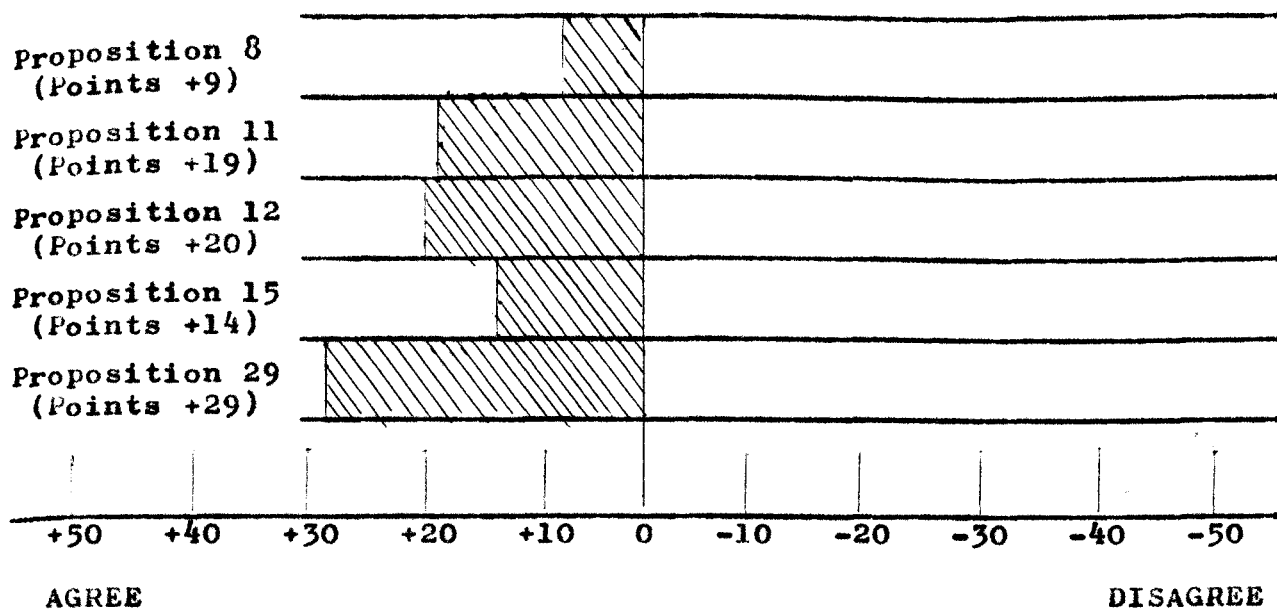
In conclusion, the community determines the quantity and quality of educational provisions made. If the community is to make intelligent decisions concerning these matters it must be given information on the organizational structure of the schools. It must be familiar with the programs and functions of the schools and their effects on the children. It must also be kept informed about the problems, needs, and goals of its schools. It must be constantly given information by means of media or participation so that it may make sound decisions on these most important matters. It should be noted that in this analysis the use of the terms lay citizen, community groups, formal and informal have been inter-changeable in their meaning as related to pressure group activities.

The summary graph for Hypothesis VI appears on the following page.

Proposition 8. The superintendents can best control and utilize community pressure groups through allowing their participation in school affairs.

Proposition 11. Superintendents should include lay citizens as committee members when programs of curriculum innovations are being planned.

### SUMMARY GRAPH FOR HYPOTHESIS VI



**Proposition 12. Superintendents should participate in community pressure group activities by attendance at meetings.**

Proposition 15. Superintendents should have the authority to decide which community pressure groups can best serve the schools, and then to support their activities accordingly.

Proposition 29. Superintendents should devote a considerable portion of their time to school community relations.

### Hypothesis VI

The superintendent's participative attitude allows for positive action of community pressure groups.

This hypothesis deals with the superintendent's attitude toward community pressure groups and its effects on their actions. From the evidence presented this hypothesis is accepted.

Superintendents expressed a desire to work with community pressure groups and further indicated an attitude of cooperation where it was not contrary to school board policy. Although the respondents respect the influence that some community pressure groups have, and they do sense a need to support their activities, they will do so as long as these actions do not cause them a conflict of interest. School officials are also aware of the tenuous position that this strategy may evoke. However, providing a direction for this power and preventing problems for the schools may well be worth the risk involved.

Significant credence must be given to the beneficial support that community pressure groups can have on educational outcomes. For example, many of the superintendents expressed a feeling that the support received from these groups was a factor in the passage of tax and bond issues. Still others specified that assistance from community pressure groups had helped to establish needed additional programs. It was felt by a majority of the superintendents that their personal attitude toward these groups could have been a factor in their support of this issue.

Superintendents were more agreeable to a participative attitude of individuals rather than of groups, but it was clear from the feedback on the responses that the potential risk was

still significant regardless of this distinction. Individuals have the same ability as community pressure groups in causing problems or in supporting the schools.

In actuality, if boards of education have established guidelines for their superintendents to follow, it seems that an effective utilization of special interest groups can be made. The following quote from Machiavelli's book, The Prince, may better illustrate the point:

Nor do I hold with those who regard it as presumption if a man of low and humble condition dare to discuss and settle the concerns of princes; because, just as those who draw landscapes place themselves below in the plain to contemplate the nature of the mountains and of lofty places, and in order to contemplate the plains place themselves high upon the mountain even so to understand the nature of the people it needs to be a prince, and to understand that of princes it needs to be of the people.<sup>16</sup>

It is of significance to note that participation in certain community pressure group activities was agreeable to the majority of the superintendents. This attitude is in keeping with involvement as a possible means of generating support toward the public institutions. Also, the process of effective communication can better be nurtured by this means. School officials must, however, be discreet in not involving themselves with the activities of extremist groups whose purposes may be contrary to the interests of the public good.

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<sup>16</sup>Antony Jay, Management and Machiavelli (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1967).

There is a definite need for superintendents to encourage their boards of education to develop well-defined programs of public relations. The data revealed that school districts having the benefit of public relations programs had fewer problems in receiving support from the community for their activities. Superintendents are spending significant amounts of their time in school-community relations endeavors. This may lead to further speculation on the necessity for school boards to give closer attention to the importance of these public relation programs to effect a positive image of the schools.

#### Hypothesis VII

The superintendent's leadership effectiveness is positively influenced by his adherence to basic school board policies in his interaction with organized community pressure groups.

The purpose of hypothesis VII is to ascertain the level or degree of influence board of education policy will have on the leadership role of superintendents when dealing with special interest groups. This hypothesis will further explore the procedures and tactics used by boards of education in policy-making which affects community pressure groups. It was related earlier in this chapter the importance for board members to spell out their policies and procedures when interacting with pressure groups. The data from the items related to the above hypothesis will give insight into the strategies used by both

superintendents and boards of education relevant to those procedures and tactics. Few would deny that boards of education should be active decision-makers, and like other legislative bodies, they are confronted with many matters which they must act upon. A responsibility of the superintendent is to advise and recommend reasons and alternatives from which logical decisions may be made by board members. It is, therefore, intrinsic to this operation that policy-making be well thought out, not only for its immediate effects but also for its long-term influence on school operations.

The behavior of the superintendent is usually conditioned by the values he holds, but another essential ingredient is his perception of school board members and their attitudes on school matters. The development of policies and procedures will be directly influenced by the variables just mentioned. This process of decision-making is further influenced by the many community agencies, groups, individuals, and media that come in contact with boards of education and their representatives.

The literature points to increasing efforts on behalf of school boards to encourage participation of the public in educational matters. This public involvement alone necessitates a need for well-developed procedures and policies for the sake of avoiding confusion.

Not all citizens or groups participate with the idea of being helpful to the schools. Are school board policies

designed to negate these problem groups? Do superintendents use policy only when necessary to control or impede the influence of groups? Do superintendents implement policy on a bilateral basis regardless of whom it might affect? Does written board policy help the superintendent to influence the actions of community pressure groups in a positive manner? Propositions two, eighteen, nineteen, and thirty relate directly to these questions.

Proposition 2

School board policy should be used to control the activities of community pressure groups.

SA	A	U	D	SD
(2) 9%	(7) 32%	(1) 5%	(8) 36%	(4) 18%

(Total points received -5)

There was no general agreement found among the superintendents on proposition two. A great deal of scatter was evident in the responses made by the respondents. Nine of the superintendents were of the opinion that the tactics used by some groups made it mandatory for boards of education to implement policy of a restrictive nature. As one respondent related during the interview, "Very frankly speaking - you must set some restrictive policy on these groups or else they can disrupt meetings." One superintendent was even considering having a police officer in attendance at all board meetings because of previous disruptions caused by extremist elements. He further

added, "They don't care about what the board policy states - these people have unbending ways about them which no board of education policy is going to restrict." This group of superintendents was also of the opinion that any policy developed should still allow these groups to express their attitudes and demands in a democratic way without causing disruption to the educational programs of the community.

The respondents at the opposite extreme who were in disagreement with proposition two felt that policy formulation of this type was not necessary if channels of communication were kept open. Still others expressed a viewpoint that board policy should reflect a fairness to all community members regardless of attitudes they might have concerning the schools.

In summary, then, the respondents were evenly divided on their feelings about proposition two. However, a majority of the respondents indicated that school board policy should not restrict the rights of these groups to communicate with the board of education and their representatives.

#### Proposition 18

Superintendents should encourage boards of education to establish written policy in dealing with community pressure groups.

SA	A	U	D	SD
(8) 36%	(12) 55%	(2) 9%	(0)	(0)
(Total points received +30)				



There was agreement on the issue of written policy to deal with community pressure groups. Respondents indicated a desire to see policy development which could assist them in their interaction with pressure groups. Some superintendents said that their boards seemed reluctant to write policy in this area, the attitude being that no reason has presented itself for this consideration. Still others expressed the difficulties that could arise when there is no procedure to follow. One superintendent related the following experience:

My board has always been careful to set policy and allow the professional staff to develop procedure and evaluation. We just recently came under attack by a group about some curriculum materials in our library. Well, the board decided to ask the group what they wanted; after that, all hell broke loose. They seemed to think that the board was weak and under poor leadership. They are still coming to our board meetings, but the board members did establish a policy on communication to somewhat ease the situation.

There does seem to be a desire on the part of superintendents for written policy in dealing with these matters. However, some reluctance on behalf of board members was evidenced in the reactions of the superintendents to this item. There is need for superintendents to give priority to the education of board members on the need for written policy. It does seem, however, that the respondents have not taken the initiative to express an urgency in this area of operation to the members of their respective boards of education.

Proposition 19

All community pressure groups should be made aware of board of education policies by the superintendent.

SA	A	U	D	SD
(6) 27%	(15) 68%	(0)	(1) 5%	(0)

(Total points received +26)

There seems to be some consistency in the respondents' attitude that the superintendent has the obligation and responsibility to communicate board policy to these groups. The data from proposition eighteen, page 127, support the attitude stated in the above proposition. Respondents reported a need to communicate policy to all community groups. The data from the above proposition reflect an attitude of sensible communication to these special groups. Only one respondent disagreed with the notion that he was under any obligation to communicate board policy under these circumstances. A portion of his remarks are quoted below:

The logic of that attitude has a lot of holes in it. Let me put it this way - If we are having difficulty with certain groups and I try to communicate with them on procedure or policy, I may be allowing for further stimulation to their particular cause. Past experience leads me to believe you're better off making no special provisions for any group. The policy should be communicated in the standard way - newsletters, etc.

The majority of respondents were of the opinion that meetings on board policy could be an excellent means of communicating with these special groups. As one respondent stated,

"I think it's much better to talk with people when you don't have a crisis brewing. Also, I'll discuss school policy with any group; it's part of my job." The general feeling, then, is that superintendents should devote time to communicating procedures and policy to the general public regardless of what special interest they may have. Further support for this attitude can also be documented from the data presented on proposition twenty-nine, page 115. Many of the activities listed by the respondents as public relations procedures have implications toward this position of superintendent responsibility to communicate school policies to all groups in the community.

#### Proposition 30

The board of education should adopt policies which will restrict community pressure groups' activities within the schools.

SA		A		U		D		SD	
(2)	9%	(18)	82%	(2)	9%	(0)		(0)	

(Total points received +22)

The key words in this proposition are "restrict" and "activities within the schools." Respondents again in their reactions indicate a concern that special interest groups must be restricted in activities that occur during school hours or at school sponsored activities. There is a sensitivity that if they are allowed to penetrate initially in this way, it could mean eventual take-over of the schools. Over ninety percent of

the superintendents were of the opinion that this form of restriction is really meant for only the extreme fringes of the community. As one respondent put it:

There is a point where you can't even act on the normal business of the board unless you have policy to restrict some of these left- and right-wing groups. I don't think these extreme groups are really that concerned about communication with the board. Their intent is to destroy the system. Our board of education has taken preventive action by means of policy so as to give the community a means by which they may communicate, but it also is a means by which disruptive elements can be controlled.

The tenor of comments made by the respondents were generally toward restrictions because of a need to regulate potential "in school" activities of certain groups. Further consensus was found in the superintendents' attitude that their first priority is the orderly operation of the schools. Situations that may be disruptive to this purpose can best be handled by policy and procedure methods.

It can be stated that superintendents are concerned about the fringe elements of pressure groups and feel board policy should be implemented to restrict their activities in the schools. In addition, it was felt that these controls should not negate the orderly participation of any community groups in the affairs of the schools. The summary table for Hypothesis VII appears on the following page.

#### Summary and Analysis

The leadership role of the superintendency is influenced by policy and procedures which may be mandated by boards of

Summary Table for Hypothesis VII

	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	UNDECIDED	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
Proposition 19 (Points +26)	(6) 27%	(15) 68%	(0)	(1) 5%	(0)
Proposition 30 (Points +26)	(2) 9%	(18) 82%	(2) 9%	(0)	(0)
Proposition 2 (Points -5)	(2) 9%	(7) 32%	(1) 5%	(8) 36%	(4) 18%
Proposition 18 (Points +30)	(8) 36%	(12) 55%	(2) 9%	(0)	(0)

education. The need for written school board policy was evident by the general remarks of the respondents. It seems that board members have a lower priority than superintendents on the urgency for such policy, according to the superintendents. Further implications stress the need for superintendents to exert a leadership role in moving their boards of education toward the development of written policy as a means of better communication with the community. The data show that the respondents have a concern to uphold the democratic process, but are disturbed by the tactics of some extreme elements within the local community. The respondents are also of the opinion that these so-called restrictions, specified by board policy, should be utilized only as a means of maintaining the orderly operation of the educational programs. The attitude generally present among the respondents was that board policy should not be used to control

the activities of any single group, but to be applied on a democratic basis to promote the means of communication and understanding of each other's responsibilities and interests in the school-community.

Superintendents must begin to exert a more direct application of their role as advisor and consultant to the board of education. It seems from the remarks and pattern of responses made that there is a need for superintendents to assist board members to appreciate the importance of written policy. The respondents made many remarks about the additional benefits these policies could foster in their interactions with community pressure groups. The position seems to be that written policy will give the superintendent the needed clarification and direction on an immediate basis in dealing with potential pressures which could disturb the orderly operation of the schools. The respondents are concerned about the tactics and influence that some special groups can exert on the schools so they are looking for ways to impede this intrusion. Development of well-defined policy can be a logical step in this direction.

It is also indicated from the remarks made that respondents are not as concerned about refuting the charges of the special interest groups, but rather to develop constructive processes to inform the critics of what is going on in the educational program.

Superintendents reflected the feeling that the leadership direction provided by their office was the essential foundation needed before boards of education could be expected to react in a constructive manner in policy formulation.

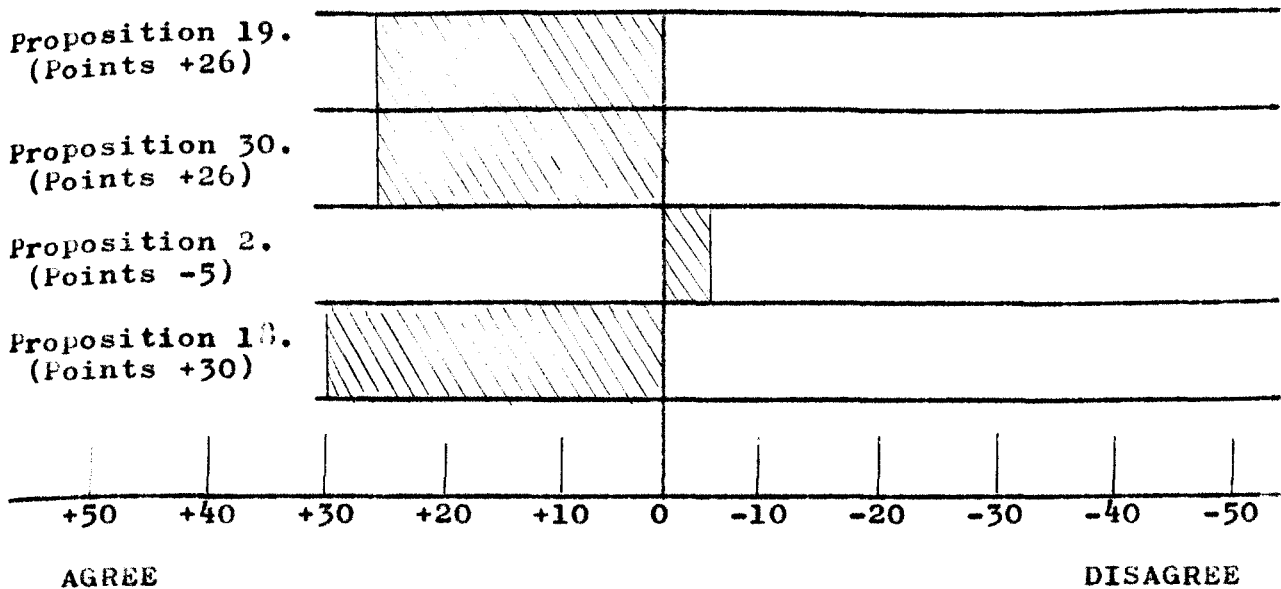
Superintendents should be given board of education sanction to establish committees to study and evaluate present policy for the purpose of strengthening good communications and procedures with community groups. The evidence from the remarks made by the superintendents indicate that many of the boards of education with which they work do not have sufficient policy defined relating to the operational aspect of the school.

There is, then, an urgency for superintendents to take a leadership role in these matters of board policy development. A component of their responsibility as the chief school officials is to operationalize procedures which will give board members an honest appraisal of this need. School officials are affected in their leadership role when lines of communication and procedure are not well-defined. It is to their advantage to seek alternatives by which these matters can be defined and thus give sequence to their role. Written board of education policy is a positive step in this direction.

The summary graph for hypothesis VII appears on the following page.

Proposition 19. All community pressure groups should be made aware of board of education policies by the superintendent.

### SUMMARY GRAPH FOR HYPOTHESIS VII



**Proposition 30. The board of education should adopt policies which will restrict community pressure group activity within the schools.**

Proposition 2. School board policy should be used to control the activities of community pressure groups.

**Proposition 18.** Superintendents should encourage boards of education to establish written policy in dealing with community pressure groups.

### Hypothesis VII

The superintendent's leadership effectiveness is positively influenced by his adherence to basic school board policies in his interaction with organized community pressure groups.

This hypothesis implies that the superintendents' leadership will be more effective when he applies board of



education policy in his actions with community pressure groups. It further attempts to find out the degree of importance these same administrators place on board of education policy as a factor in their leadership role. The data presented are in agreement for acceptance of this hypothesis.

Superintendents must be cognizant of the increasing efforts of community pressure groups to participate in educational matters. This public interest necessitates an implementation of board policy by which these groups may be heard and/or involved in school affairs.

School officials should be careful not to influence their boards of education to write policy which is intended to restrict the actions of extremist groups, but which in actuality may serve to negate the effectiveness of legitimate group activities.

Listed below are community pressure groups found to have influence on the superintendent. This list of special groups was compiled from interviews with the superintendents involved in this study. The groups mentioned in this list are in a rank order of importance as perceived by the superintendents.

<u>Group</u>	<u>Number of Times Mentioned</u>
P.T.A. or P.T.O. Groups.....	16
Taxpayer Association and Homeowner's Groups.....	12

<u>Group</u>	<u>Number of Times Mentioned</u>
Extremist Groups (e.g. John Birch Society, S.D.S.).....	11
Band Booster's Groups Athletic Groups.....	7
Chamber of Commerce.....	7
Human Relations Groups.....	5
National Assoc. for the Advancement of Colored People.....	4
Youth Organizations.....	4
Service Clubs (e.g. Rotary).....	2
Others mentioned only once.....	6

Local religious groups, village governments, political parties, business groups, American Legion, local newspaper. Organizations which are found to have the greatest influence on schools can be categorized as formal community groups such as the Parent Teacher Association (P.T.A.). A significant number of superintendents felt increasing pressure from Extremist Groups during the past year. There is indication from the responses that school officials are becoming more aware of the types of community groups which may exert influence on the schools. The literature has stressed the importance for school superintendents to be knowledgeable about the power structure of the community and their implications for schools. Respondents' concern on developing strategies to effectively utilize these community groups

was evidenced during the interviews. In some cases it was reported that school board policy was being developed to assist in utilizing the talents of community groups.

The basic rationale behind written policy should not be to control or restrict, but to assist in formulating an orderly procedure by which educational productivity for the student is protected.

The economic, political, and social structure of communities today calls for more intellectual controversy as a means of expressing one's interests and demands. Superintendents cannot afford to become polarized, therefore, not to accepting individuals, or community groups as equal partners in the affairs of governmental agencies. A true test of administrative leadership can best be made by the ability to influence the attitudes of community members toward these public agencies. School board policy can be the means to reach this ultimate end. Maximum effort should be given to community concern, if for no other reason than to receive a feedback on public opinion to Board of Education procedures and policies.

A better understanding of the rationale beyond policy can bring about a more knowledgeable community, which may then contribute its time, energy, and expertise to assisting the Programs of education in the community.

## CHAPTER IV

### A CASE STUDY OF A COMMUNITY PRESSURE GROUP'S ACTIVITIES IN A SUBURBAN COMMUNITY

The importance of understanding the techniques and strategies employed by certain community pressure groups can be of significant value to school administrators in their perception of the influences that these groups may have on the educational process. The intent of Chapter IV will be to present a case study of one school district's experiences with a pressure group. An attempt will be made to illustrate the side effects that usually generate from the interactions of the pressure group influentials, school board members, and school officials.

This case study will contain an account of activities and incidences that transpired during the process of the implementation of a Health and Sex Education Program in School District No. 110, Deerfield, Illinois. The content was gathered from interviews with school board members, school administrators and influentials from the pressure group involved. Also, personal observations and current literature helped to supplement the

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The author wishes to acknowledge the contributions of Howard J. DePree, Member, Board of Education, District 110, for allowing use of his personal reports in this chapter.

accounts reported in this chapter. The analysis here is not concerned with attempting to refute the pressure group or to answer their charges; it is committed, however, to inform educators of the types of criticism that must be dealt with by today's superintendent.

In Chapter II of this study it was suggested that certain fringe groups in the community may engage in activities of an extremist nature which can be detrimental to the welfare of the students. There is some evidence of extremist activities in school affairs. Theodore W. Foat<sup>1</sup> made an extensive study of right-wing pressure groups in the New England states. Further testimony by John Edgar Hoover during the 1969 hearings of the House Un-American Activities Committee suggested that a number of extremist pressure groups were engaged in actions against the public schools of the land.<sup>2</sup>

The community pressure group to be studied in this chapter will be classified as a right wing group. In all fairness it should be indicated that extremist groups can be found on the continuum to the far left as well. Although their purpose may be for a different social, political, and economic cause the tactics employed by these left wing groups are similar

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<sup>1</sup>Foat, op. cit., p. 5.

<sup>2</sup>Testimony of J. Edgar Hoover, Director, Federal Bureau of Investigation, Washington, D.C.: Before the House Subcommittee on Un-American Activities, April 17, 1969, pp. 61-62.

to the methods reported in the case study. (A definition of this term is found in Chapter I, p. 17). Briefly, groups of this type are usually found having the following characteristics.

1. They are militantly patriotic and that there is a simple solution available for even the most complex problem.
2. The desire to limit the relationship between the individual and government. They argue for a strict limitation of government powers in favor of more individual freedom.
3. Strong emphasis is given to "Educational fundamentalism." Importance is put on getting back to the three R's and getting away from modern "frills" such as guidance.

While specific attacks on the schools will vary from place to place, Foat has identified the following methods advocated in New England. Citizens are urged to:

Criticize text books as socialistic or un-American; exert pressure for a compulsory course on the dangers of Communism; seek greater attention to basic education; attack the guidance program; look for radicals that may speak at school programs; turn P.T.A.'s into forums for the expression of their point of view. Urge school board members and administrators to have special programs on the Communist conspiracy.<sup>3</sup>

Other investigations by Raywid<sup>4</sup> found that extremist groups are giving more attention to blocking financial support to the schools as a means of influence. In most cases it seems, however, that they are more concerned about what is going on in

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<sup>3</sup>Foat, op. cit., p. 7.

<sup>4</sup>Mary Ann Raywid, The Ax-Grinders (New York: The MacMillan Company, 1962), p. 17.

the school rather than criticism of educational expenditures.

Much of the literature of the right-wing groups reveal considerable concern with ways to infiltrate the schools and school-related organizations. The John Birch Society has been critical of the schools and has suggested specific activities at the local level by its members. Statements by Robert H. W. Welsh, Founder of the Society, indicates the Society's viewpoint. Welsh says:

We know something of what is taking place in the field of public education, in the attempt to convert the whole system into indoctrination and thought-control agency of a Socialist Big Brother Government.<sup>5</sup>

The John Birch Society also suggests that its members engage in the following actions:

We also urge you to become acquainted with the teachers and administrators of your local schools, study the text books being used, visit meetings of your local school committees, and otherwise take a lot of direct personal interest in the kind of job which your agents, whom you are paying to teach your children, are actually doing.

One of the major functions of the John Birch Society, over the next several years, is to help mightily in restoring Americanist principles and purposes to our American schools. This can be accomplished only by the cumulative effects of an infinite number of small and conscientious labors on the part of our members. And it is time we got started on that task with a will.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>5</sup>"Bulletin for October," The White Book of the John Birch Society for 1961 (Belmont, Mass.: 1961), p. 19.

<sup>6</sup>"Bulletin for December," Ibid., pp. 16-17.

To stimulate further the activities of its members, attacks on Health and Sex Education Programs and Guidance Programs have been made by the Society.

Special attention is being given to the John Birch Society in this section of the research due to the indirect influence it had on the actions of citizens as reported in the case study. Other groups, however, such as the Students for a Democratic Society (S.D.S.) could generate similar influences.

In addition to the approaches reported, there are other techniques used to influence the schools. Among those are organizations with programs geared to awaken the community to the dangers of Communism.<sup>7</sup> One of these "front" organizations of the Society, Motorede, which stands for "Movement to Restore Decency," will be the pressure group discussed in this chapter.

The attention these groups give to education and ways to influence school policies is indicative of the importance they attach to education. The problem which may surface is not that they may influence our schools, our form of government is committed to encouraging the expression of ideas. The basic problem may rest in the tactics which are employed by these groups in the obtainment of their objectives.

No exercise is more fascinating, illuminating and depressing for a school administrator than to weed out his

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<sup>7</sup>The Blue Book of the John Birch Society (Belmont, Mass.: The Society; 8th printing, 1961), p. 162.



voluminous file on sex education, from the stacks of frayed notebooks and faded newspaper clippings. The dominant sensation that emerges from this review is disbelief that the United States, purportedly a nation of hard-headed pragmatists, could have stumbled so blindly into a disaster that is now shaking the public school stability and threatening to undermine its relationship to the communities for a generation to come. Equally striking, in retrospect, is how little has changed over the years since the celebrated "Monkey" trials of 1925. The search for the elusive truth about health and sex education, or what some like to call a "family life program," will surely preoccupy historians and sociologists far into the future.

School District No. 110's commitment to a program of Health and Sex Education evolved gradually, beginning in 1966. School District 110 is an elementary school district serving the western half of the Village of Deerfield and most of the smaller neighboring community of Riverwoods. The Chamber of Commerce would declare that Deerfield's 20,000 residents enjoy the advantages of small-town living combined with the cultural opportunities of a nearby metropolis. It is a district rich in tradition and integrity, and during the years, the boards of education have worked hard to develop and maintain a reputation for providing a program which is academically sound, of high quality, and in step with evergrowing demands of the times.

This system, with its four schools and approximately thousand students, cooperates with six other elementary districts as well as District 113, representing high schools in Deerfield and Highland Park. These Districts have formed a cooperating Committee for Interdistrict Cooperation, commonly known as CIC. This Committee for Interdistrict Cooperation, while recognizing the legal autonomy of each local school district, allows for the sharing of talent, facilities, work, work products, experience and research, both horizontally at the elementary school level and vertically with the high school.

At a meeting of CIC on October 26, 1966, a decision was made to submit to the Federal Government a proposal for a planning grant for a health and sex education program. On January 9, 1967, School District 110 approved submission of the application along with other Districts comprising CIC. An application was submitted by CIC and approved under Title III of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act in June, 1967.

Prior to this time, on August 27, 1965, the State of Illinois had approved what is called a "Sex Education Act."<sup>8</sup> This Act relates to the promotion of an educational program in the schools of Illinois concerning family life, sex, and venereal diseases, and allows for the establishment of a Division of Sex Education in the Office of the Superintendent of Public

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<sup>8</sup> Illinois Revised Statutes, Chapter 122 (Sec. 698.51-698.55, 1965).

Instruction. A further refinement to the Sex Education Act was approved on October 6, 1969. It states,

No pupil shall be required to take or participate in any class or course in comprehensive sex education if his parent or guardian submits written objection thereto and refusal to take or participate in such course or program shall not be reason for suspension or expulsion of such pupil. Nothing in this Section prohibits instruction in sanitation, hygiene or traditional courses in biology. An opportunity shall be afforded to such parents or guardians to examine the instructional materials to be used in such class or course.<sup>9</sup>

After the approval of the grant for \$26,820.00 by the Federal Government, twenty-six local teachers were selected from the participating school districts to research, design and write a program consistent with the needs of the local area. These teachers met during the 1967-68 school year to research and design the program. At least nine different consultants, along with local religious leaders and school administrators, met with the teachers to share their viewpoints as well as to react to the work of the teacher committee. The professional staffs, during April of 1968, had developed and approved the content outline. The teacher's guide was then constructed from the outline during the Summer of 1968 under the direction of Dr. Nathir G. Sara, Project Director and CIC Coordinator.

The publication, for students through the eighth grade, in its final form was entitled "A Teaching Program in Health and

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<sup>9</sup>Illinois Revised Statutes, Chapter 122, Ibid. (Sec. 27-9.1, 1969).

Sex Education"<sup>10</sup> and consisted of three hundred pages. The program is divided into three basic parts. Part One is a teaching program for Kindergarten and Grades 1 through 4 where the usual setting is a self-contained classroom. The second part of the program is to be utilized in Grades 5 through 8. The lessons presented in Part Two have been designed for use by teachers of language, arts, science, social studies and physical education. It was determined that lessons in health and sex education be integrated with existing programs in these subjects. The high school, or third part, has been written as an independent course of study to be taught by a specialized health educator.

The Preface of the document describes in detail the necessary requirements in order to institute such a program: (1) in-service education of teachers; (2) community support; (3) implementation of the recommendations of the Illinois Sex Education Advisory Board; and (4) adherence to the policy statement on family life and sex education issued by the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction. In addition, questions concerning coeducational or separate classes have been examined. Reference materials and instructional aids are listed along with the suggestion that any program is dependent upon parental consent.

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<sup>10</sup>"A Teaching Program in Health and Sex Education," Committee for Interdistrict Cooperation (Deerfield: mimeographed text, April, 1968), p. 7.

The five-page introduction to the publication defines terms, states the objectives of a health and sex education program, and explains the necessity for health and sex education in the public school system. It further describes the profound social changes which have occurred in our society during the last several decades and some of the complicated problems involving questions of ethics, as well as the realization that any good health and sex education program is the responsibility of the home, Church or Synagogue, and the school system.

Rather than have the reader believe that the program is strictly a sex program, it might be advantageous to at least state the units of study. The first, for Grades "K" through 4, are as follows: the family and the individual; mental and emotional health; the human body; habits of healthful living; communicable disease; and community health agencies.

For Grades 5 through 8: safety and first aid, the human body, family and the individual, nutrition, exercise, posture and rest, total body grooming, common diseases, mental health and behavior, tobacco, alcohol and drugs, and health agencies.

This, then, is the program developed by local teachers, administrators, consultants and the clergy. This final document after its completion, was delivered to each of the different school districts in December, 1968. As is true of all of the materials for the curriculum developed by and through

CIC, each local school district reviews and considers whether it desires to implement in its own system the materials as developed.

One reality of modern times is that the public school curriculum has changed. Classic readers and books can no longer be a complete model for use in the schools of today. The rural world of the 19th Century has become largely urbanized. World population has almost tripled in the last hundred years. The United States has survived two World Wars and a series of brush wars - some still in progress. The country has experienced revolution in industry, communication, ecology, and space.

Ecumenism is supplanting many of the ancient and bitter religious and cultural rivalries. Never before has there been so much discussion and action about human rights, human freedom, and human development. It is not surprising that our schools have reflected increasingly in their structure and programs all of these developments.

The school is the place where young people meet and come of age - an often unruly process - the place where important problems are discussed with all manner of solutions proposed; the place where all the burning issues of the day are ventilated. Every school should be a place where relevant courses are taught, relevant questions are asked, and where answers and solutions are sought in an atmosphere of freedom and responsible inquiry. Sexuality seemed to be one of the

subjects which should be discussed in the school in this type of atmosphere.

As the staff was going through the various phases of reviewing materials and procedures, attempts were made to inform the residents of the District about the events and progress taking place. On July 7, 1968, while the curriculum was being prepared by CIC, an article appeared in a local paper describing the work of the CIC on the health and sex education curriculum guide. On July 24, 1968, an extensive article about the entire program and its general aims and goals appeared in the news media. During November, 1968, an article appeared in one of the local papers describing a neighboring district's agenda for implementation of a program in their school system and reference was made to the fact that other school systems would follow.

Later in 1968, the Superintendent of District 110 met with religious leaders, described the program, answered questions, and passed out the curriculum guide to all of those present. In addition, curriculum guides, as they became available, were mailed out to the Illinois Social Hygiene League, the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction, Department of Health Services, Hinsdale Health Museum, Highland Park Family Service Association for Family Living, - the purpose being to receive a critique from each of them.

During the latter part of 1968 and early part of 1969, there was much discussion and debate about sex education, health

programs, and family life programs in the school system. The Board members and staff were reading a wealth of material concerning this subject. They found no standardized system of family life education, but an analysis did indicate that the general picture of family education in school systems was far from satisfactory.

It was felt that education for family living with all its intricacies would make challenging subject matter for classes at any age level and add vitality to the traditional curriculum. Some contended that the school is justified in assuming part of the job because it is the chief repository of research findings and is better staffed than the average family could hope to be to give young people the technical aspects of child and family development; however, those who researched the subject thoroughly found that too few students were being reached to make any appreciable difference in the general stream of family living. There seemed to be more emphasis upon domestic skills than upon family relationship and getting along creatively with family members. More was being taught about the family in other times and places than about our own here and now - more about what is wrong with families and about how to improve one's relationship.

Henry Bowman, author of "Education for Marriage and Family Life," recognized this when he said,

Successful marriage and family life must cease to be merely a by-product of our educational system and become one of its major objectives. This will involve



not only courses, teachers, and counselors in this area, but also, new emphases, new methods or coordination and integration, new foci, new perspective through the educational process.<sup>11</sup>

Community acceptance is probably the most crucial aspect of a family life program development. Realizing this, much time was devoted keeping the citizenry informed as to the aims, objectives and aspirations of any program that would be initiated. Local newspapers cooperated by interviewing the Superintendent and writing many articles on the subject.

For example, on February 19, 1969, the Superintendent was given news space wherein he spoke concerning health and sex educational programs which stressed family, school and Church working together. During March, 1969, the Newsletter from the District was mailed to each family. The Superintendent's report was completely devoted to health and sex education programs describing the historical development and the process of study which the Board was undertaking with its professional staff, and included an invitation to any resident of the community to communicate with the Board or administrative staff so that any questions could be answered.

On March 12, 1969, the Junior High School PTA meeting was devoted to discussing the CIC curriculum guide. This meeting was publicized in the papers, and fliers were sent home

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<sup>11</sup>Harry Bowman, "Education for Marriage and Family Life," Marriage and Family Living, Volume 83 (Summer, 1946), p. 64.

with all junior high school pupils stating that Dr. Sara, CIC's coordinator, would speak.

Further, on March 18, 1969, Dr. Franklin Fitch, Director of Professional Services of the Illinois Social Hygiene League, spoke before one of the elementary School PTA's concerning health and sex education. This meeting was also highly publicized.

During this entire period, the staff was moving ahead cautiously for two reasons. First of all, there was no need for a "crash" program, and secondly, much of the information that was indicated in the teacher's guide was being taught in the regular curriculum. Therefore, the administration and Board of Education felt they were moving ahead sensibly with meticulous care and deliberation.

The first indication of discontent was received through a letter dated March 14, 1969, from a parent. He expressed what was later found to be the usual objections and, in addition, indicated that he wanted the Board of Education members to listen to a tape recording by Dr. Gordon V. Drake, who was associated with the Christian Crusade. In addition to telling what had happened in Sweden, this resident stated that he had no affiliation with any organization which had taken a public stand for or against this type of program.

On March 21, 1969, another parent forwarded a letter to each member of the Board indicating that she was concerned about

any health and sex education program and enclosed a booklet entitled "A Parent Looks at Public School Sex Education," published by Motorede.

In order to listen to comments of residents from the school district, a workshop meeting was scheduled for April 7, 1969. It was planned that at this meeting a tape recording, Dr. Gordon Drake, would be heard, and the Board of Education would listen to comments from anyone desiring to express himself. It was expected that possibly a dozen persons might attend; when the Board president called the meeting to order, approximately one hundred individuals were present. Of course, a number of these were teachers and other personnel of the school system.

A request was made by the Board President that each person present sign a list and give his address so that a record could be made of those in attendance. This list was pilfered by one of the persons there, and the Board of Education never did know exactly the number in attendance, however, from watching the list as it was being signed, and from the statements of those who addressed the group, it was learned that some were persons from Wilmette, Winnetka, Waukegan and other school districts.

Most of the persons speaking used the same facts and figures. They stated that sex education involved a Communist plot, had been tried and used in Sweden with dire results, was against religious principles, and that those who were involved

had a sinister objective to create an unceasing and dangerous obsession with sex in the minds of children.

One woman, not from the District, stood up and indicated that those who were on the SIECUS National Board and interested in sex education programs are included in F.B.I. files. She said that this means that they are Communists.

After this workshop meeting the staff knew that they were being attacked, and also realized that it was undoubtedly an organized action.

This particular Spring marked the first major offensive in the right wing, anti-sex education campaign. The Deerfield-Highland Park MOTOREDE Committee was formed. MOTOREDE stands for "Movement to Restore Decency." According to the Deerfield Review of May 14, 1970, this group's immediate aim was to prevent the introduction of the sex and health education program in School District 110.<sup>12</sup> This group initiated so-called educational meetings in private homes, and before long, school officials began to find literature, letters to the editor, and statements critical of the Board members, the Superintendent of the District, the CIC, and others being made at board meetings and in telephone conversations.

There seemed to be four major points raised to advance the arguments against sex education. These could be

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<sup>12</sup>Deerfield Review article, May 14, 1970, p. 19.

characterized as follows: (1) sex education should be left to the family; (2) sex education should not be taught without the teaching of a religious morality; (3) sex education is a Communist plot; and (4) pornography is introduced into the classroom by sex education.

The Motorede organization was not created in Deerfield, but rather is part of a nationwide MOTOREDE Committee developed in Belmont, Massachusetts, and San Moreno, California. According to the principles and purposes as stated in its 1969 booklet,<sup>13</sup> the movement is sponsored and given the nationwide organizational support of the John Birch Society with the specific purpose of exposing and opposing the entire program of sex education, giving support exactly as it has done in the movement to "Support Your Local Police" and other public-spirited drives with wide popular support.

The following quote from their booklet illustrates the position:

But we do not believe that the current drive for sex education is even intended by its originators and promoters to provide a needed and beneficial service in the schools. It is their sinister objective, instead, to create an unceasing and dangerous obsession with sex in the minds of our children.<sup>14</sup>

Quickly, it was found that MOTOREDE was not the name of the only group opposing sex education. The organization

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<sup>13</sup>"The Principles and Purposes of the Movement To Restore Decency," (Belmont, Mass.: May, 1969), p. 1.

<sup>14</sup>Ibid., p. 5.

names vary from state to state, but the quotes, the statistics, the data, and the pronouncements are all the same. They include "Sanity On Sex," or "SOS." Others are "Mothers Organized For Moral Stability" (MOMS), or "Citizens for Parents' Rights," and "People Against Unconstitutional Sex Education," known as "PAUSE."

These tricks to spell out names seem to have no end, "CHURCH" - Christian Homes United to Restore Christian Heritage," or CHRIST, known as "Citizens Heeding Righteousness Instead of Satanic Tyranny," or "TACT" - "Truth About Civil Turmoil." It is difficult for most persons to be against "CHURCH," "CHRIST," and "TACT!" Another one: "CHIDE" - "Committee to Halt Indoc-trination and Demoralization in Education." Also, "PRE" - "Parents for Responsible Education."

As Norma Morrison, of the National Board of Sponsors of the Institute for American Democracy, recently said,

You have to look behind these phony fronts for the real purposes, and indicated that . . . the job would be easier if the bad guys wore black hats with bands inscribed 'John Birch Society', but they don't. Instead, they wear white hats with red, white and blue bands.<sup>15</sup>

The major impetus of nationwide opposition seems to have started in September, 1968, when the Christian Crusade, with its headquarters in Tulsa, Oklahoma, and led by the Rev. Billy James Hargis, initiated a direct-mail promotion. The Christian

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<sup>15</sup>Norma L. Morrison, Speech at the Illinois Association of School Boards, North Chicago Community High School, October 10, 1970, North Chicago, Illinois.

Crusade has been described as "a kind of fundamentalist adjunct of the John Birch Society," but with an identity of its own and a somewhat broader following. Formed in the early 1950's, it bases its anti-Communism on a simplified emotional appeal.<sup>16</sup> The promotion effort to raise money occurred through the distribution of a forty-page booklet entitled "Is The Schoolhouse The Proper Place To Teach Raw Sex?", written by Dr. Gordon V. Drake, Educational Director of Christian Crusade.

Perhaps the best indication of the tone of this booklet can be found by looking at several excerpts from the promotion letter.<sup>17</sup> On family life education, it states, " . . . This overall scheme to demoralize youth, repudiate the so-called antiquated morals of Christianity, drive a cleavage between students and parents, and introduce to curious youth the abnormal in sex is all a part of a giant communist conspiracy."

In describing those responsible, it continues, ". . . the officers of the National Education Association (NEA), The Department of Health, Education and Welfare, Sex Information and Education Council (SIECUS), the National Council of Churches, and the rest of rotten, liberal establishment . . ."

Further in stating its purpose,

This letter is a frank appeal for funds to run Christian Crusade. We are behind with our publishers,

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<sup>16</sup>J. A. Foster, and William Epstein, Danger On The Right (New York: Random House Publishers, 1967), p. 26.

<sup>17</sup>Christian Crusade Newsletter (Oklahoma City: 1968).

our radio stations, and our suppliers. . . We need your help. With your help now, we can go forward with all our projects, including this important new one . . . to stop this vicious 'Sex in Schools Campaign.'

The present income of Christian Crusade is estimated at approximately one million dollars per year.<sup>18</sup> What Dr. Drake did with his booklet in speaking tours soon began to appeal to other groups. It wasn't long before the John Birch Society's monthly bulletin attacked sex education as a "filthy Communist plot," and the Society's magazine, "American Opinion," carried an article in March, 1969, by Garry Allen, expanding on the Drake material.

In his Blackboard Power, Drake had written, "The sex educators are in league with the sexologists." He quotes numerous leading exponents of sex education, seeming to weave an intricate mosaic purporting to reveal a diabolic and nefarious plot to seduce the minds and morals of little children.<sup>19</sup>

Many of these above statements are given an interpretation which implies an attack on the Bible and the Churches. The John Birch Society promotes the book through its American Opinion Bookstores, many films, and recorded telephone messages.

One of the common elements in almost all of the attacks is the special emphasis given to the alleged program of the Sex

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<sup>18</sup>New York Times article, October 22, 1966, p. 3.

<sup>19</sup>Gordon Drake, Blackboard Power (Tulsa, Oklahoma: Christian Crusade Press, 1968), p. 31.



Information and Education Council (SIECUS). This group appears to be the principal target. While it is not necessary to defend SIECUS, it is necessary to say that upon investigation of this organization, it is found that they have no program or curriculum.

SIECUS is a non-profit organization formed by a group of persons who were concerned with helping our society cope with problems relating to human sexuality. The Council seeks to provide information about programs and materials which schools and community agencies across the country have developed. Its members will serve as consultants to those who seek its assistance in developing programs and procedures. SIECUS has no sex education plan other than that of encouraging communities to develop their own programs. Its only publications are its quarterly newsletter and series of study guides, presently about a dozen in number, dealing with specific topics of sexual problems. These are not designed for public classroom use, and they so state. They are a resource for professionals in their own study.

Other than literature developed by the local organization, the booklet, "A Parent Looks at Public School Sex Education," by Barbara Richards of Santa Ana, California,<sup>20</sup> is more commonly used by MOTOREDE. This booklet contains 37 pages, the

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<sup>20</sup>Barbara Richards, "A Parent Looks at Public School Sex Education" (Santa Ana, California: mimeographed text, March, 1969).

first 18 being reading material. Pages 19 through 22 are called "Footnotes," and pages 23 through 37 are entitled "Fact Sheets." Many of the footnotes do not state what the reading material indicates they should, and most of the "Facts" cannot be substantiated. For example, one of the "Facts" is, "Parents in San Luis Obispo, California, are attempting to sue their school board because of the slides shown to first graders."

An editorial in the Deerfield Villager of April 28, 1969, entitled "A Matter of Concern" stated, "The proliferation of public concern over the sex education program recommended for Highland Park and Deerfield schools is understandable. . . .

"It is unfortunate, however, that a verbal brawl, punctuated by gross exaggerations and untruth, has erupted in District 110. . . .

"We share the parent's concern about whether such a broad and explicit program is a responsibility of the schools.

"So far, the District 110 Board has given every indication that it will listen to these questions and wishes.

"But some irrational charges rampant in the area are a disservice to the CIC that recommended the program, the District, and the parents - whatever opinion they have of the curriculum.

"It is a shame that some foes of the program would try to turn this very sensitive educational issue into a political issue.

"One of the writings that is being widely distributed and quoted is a John Birch Society reprinting of a Christian Crusade article . . . ."

In the midst of a growing turmoil, long telephone conversations with the antagonists were the rule. Not only were these conversations unfruitful, but after several hours of such conversation, it was found that no progress had been made. Through it all, the District 110 School Board continued its struggle to act objectively concerning the proposed family life program.

At the April 18, 1969, Board meeting, the decision was made to include a program of health and family life education in Grades "K" through 8 since it was believed to be a desirable and worthwhile addition to the curriculum. The administration was instructed to present to the Board a detailed recommendation covering course content at each grade level including a comprehensive list of resource materials for both students and teachers that actually would be used in the program. This presentation was to be made not later than July 21, 1969.

The campaign to keep school constituents constantly apprised of what was going on continued. At the Junior High School PTA meeting on May 14, 1969, an "information-please" type program was held in which all the Board members discussed various subjects concerning the school system. The President discussed the Health and Sex Education Program along with the guidance program.

On May 15, 1969, an extensive review of the curriculum guide was made by the local press. At this time, curriculum guides, or teacher's guides, were available for any parent to look at and take out on a loan basis from the Junior High School and were made available also at the libraries.

On May 19, 1969, the Woodland Park School PTA hosted the School Board so at that time items of interest to the community concerning the school system could be expounded and, again, the Health and Sex Education Program was discussed.

On May 14, 1969, an editorial in the Deerfield Review entitled, "MOTOREDE and District 110," stated, "School Board meetings in District 110 are usually attended by a reporter or two, a league of Women Voters' observer, an occasional parent, and from time to time, a contractor. Recently, the Board room at Wilmot School has been jammed with interested spectators from Deerfield and other communities as well.

"The proposed Sex-Health Education Program was not drafted by 'subversives,' Communists, naive, ignorant, or 'morally lost' men and women.

"It deserves thoughtful consideration and we believe that is what the District 110 School Board will give it if allowed to do so."

The local papers began to be filled with letters to the editor, editorials, and advertisements, all concerning sex education. For example, in May, 1969, in the Deerfield Villager,

was found - "MOTOREDE to Show Film." Next - "MOTOREDE Bars Students from Film." Another article was entitled, "Birch Backed Film - Attacks Sex Education." The film which MOTOREDE charged \$1.00 to see is called "Innocents Defiled."

Next came outside speakers. From the Deerfield Review on May 28th, it was found that the Rev. Paul Lindstrom, Chairman of the "Remember the Pueblo Committee" and Minister of the Church of Christian Liberty in Prospect Heights, had stated, "Beatles, sex education - a Red plot."

The Superintendent, after speaking before the Deerfield Rotary on sex education in the schools on June 5th, was contacted by the Chicago Sun Times' Judy Nicol,<sup>21</sup> and was quoted in her June 8th column as saying, "Few more than a dozen families in our District have managed to tie up our program for months. They used names on their letterhead whose owners later repudiated any connection. They secretly taped a school board meeting, and spliced it out-of-sequence bits of conversation, and presented it as a chronological replay of the evening."

"I have no quarrel with the honest citizens who believe the proposed manual may be too much too soon," he said. "My objection is with the Birch Society front. They want ultimately to control the schools. Sex education is only the first step. Next will be the libraries."

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<sup>21</sup>Chicago Sun Times article, June 5, 1970, p. 9.

On June 25th, an editorial in the Deerfield Review entitled "Examine Program" chided, "Don't try to call and congratulate members of MOTOREDE on their recent mailing to parents outlining reasons why sex education in public schools should be opposed.

"These people are just too modest. Their names are listed in the publication, but we challenge you to find many of them in the phone book. Of the 49 persons listed as MOTOREDE members, all but 11 used just their initials and surname. Of the 11 that gave their full name, four were married women who used their own first name and husband's surname."

The booklet that the editorial was referring to was entitled "You Be the Judge," and was mailed to each resident in District 110. It was also sold at various locations for \$1.00.

An editorial from the May 23rd Deerfield Villager entitled "Facts v. Innuendos" declared,

A booklet entitled 'You Be The Judge' that recently was mailed to area residents is designed to scare parents into emotional opposition to sex education courses. Many parents have legitimate concern about sex education . . . who the teachers will be, what kind of training will the teacher receive, and what will be taught when.

But the booklet exaggerates these very real and legitimate concerns with distortions and misconceptions. The booklet was published by the Deerfield-Highland Park MOTOREDE Committee, a group that was organized by members of the Deerfield Chapter of the John Birch Society and other concerned parents who believe that sex education would pervert our youth, destroy family relationships and encourage immorality.

Many of the charges in this slick, 34-page booklet are too illogical to require answering here. Others are too dangerous to let stand.

For example, the booklet touts graphic pictures from resource materials reportedly used in sex education courses elsewhere. The implication is strong that they will be used here. The truth is that the materials were considered and rejected by the teachers who prepared the proposed guide for the local committee for Inter-District Cooperation.

The booklet also charges that the officials of Deerfield School District 110 are afraid to encourage open debate on the present outline for fear of parent opposition. Why then has the District 110 Board met with its PTA's to discuss the CIC's recommendations? Why was a special meeting called, at the request of sex education opponents, to hear objections?

MOTOREDE further attaches sinister connotations to the District's objections to tape-recordings are illegal. MOTOREDE claims that no attempts were made to hide the tape recorded, yet it was not seen by any reporter or Board member in the room.

The booklet also questions District 110's Supt. Charles Caruso's claim that the program has had overwhelming support from local clergymen. Yet Dr. Caruso's statement was backed up by a newspaper survey that found enthusiastic support from a broad spectrum of local religious leaders. The only two with strong objections are listed on the MOTOREDE letterhead as being members of that group. 22

During the early part of July, 1969, a newsletter went out from the District indicating that it was apparent that a July 21, 1969 date for a final report to the School Board could not be met since more time was required to study the CIC curriculum than had originally been thought necessary. The newsletter also gave details of what had been happening and

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<sup>22</sup> Editorial in Deerfield Review, "Facts v. Innuendo," May 23, 1969.

indicated that the staff had reached three conclusions: (1) the program recommended by the CIC Guide is good and, but for a few modifications, will be recommended for adoption; (2) a plan for introducing the parents of the District to the actual materials to be used prior to implementation should be developed by the administrative staff; and (3) a thorough in-service program should be conducted for teachers and administrators prior to implementation of any content not being taught at this time.

As the summer progressed, there was no indication that anyone or any group was going to back off. On July 30, 1969, the Board President received one of many communications from MOTOREDE'S Chairman, which included 535 different signatures allegedly from residents opposing any attempts to introduce a family life and sex education program in the School District. More than one of the other communications accused school personnel of trying to sneak the program through by not keeping the citizens properly and sufficiently informed about anything that was going on at the Board meetings. Somehow, these communications always found their way with carbon copies to Senator Kral Benning from the District, to the Superintendent of Schools of the County, Dr. William Petty, to all members of the press, and to Senator Charles Percy. However, since a school board is an autonomous organization, this method of intimidation was not very effective.



The Petition presented by MOTOREDE seemed to be a formidable blockade to progress. Many signatures were those of senior citizen residents who were not informed, and other citizens who had been told specifically that they were signing a petition to reduce taxes.

A big push was initiated by MOTOREDE just before school started for the fall term. On August 27, 1969, a full-page advertisement was purchased by MOTOREDE in the Deerfield Review, a local newspaper, outlining their reasons for opposition. All residents were receiving leaflets at the front door, and pass-out literature was being given to those who shopped in the Village Commons (Central business area). Letters continued to flood the newspaper offices. Included were attacks against Dr. Sara, CIC Director, based upon the fact that this scholarly gentleman was not a citizen of the United States.

Debate on the subject was called for by MOTOREDE in their hand-out material, but no member of the Board or Administration believed that anything would be gained by debating the issue.

The faculty committee report would be available in time for the November 10th meeting night. The Board of Education decided to vote either for adoption or rejection at that time. Upon learning that this was to take place, MOTOREDE demanded resignations of all the Board members if they initiated a program of sex education. The initial move to attempt this was

reported in the Deerfield Review on November 3rd after a MOTOREDE official had talked to the Lake County School Superintendent to find out how the Board members could be removed.

Rising to the occasion of the last battle, MOTOREDE went all out just prior to November 10th distributing more and more leaflets throughout the Village and collecting signatures until they claimed finally that they had 816 signatures of persons opposing sex education in the schools. All of the local newspapers, including those in Waukegan, were filled with letters to the editor concerning the pros and cons.

Well aware that the November 10th Board meeting would draw large crowds, it was decided that it would be held in the gymnasium auditorium of the Wilmot Junior High School.

By this time the staff had been exposed to all of the elements in the pattern that develops in one community after another across the United States as opponents of family life education programs present their attack. Here, their general thrust had included formation of a committee, the bringing in of outside speakers, support from several clergy, attempts to disrupt meetings, presentation of half-truths and dubious documentation, emotional appeals, suspicion cast on teachers, character assassination, distribution of other organizations' pamphlets or publications, letter writing, radio and TV appeals, foot-in-the-door tactics and pressure on school officials and Board members.

It is not possible to give the reader all the preliminary highlights of the November 10th Board Meeting. In short, MOTOREDE was there passing out anti sex education material, trying to disrupt the meeting by calling the TV studios to come in with their cameras (presumably so they could demonstrate), and attempting to have members of MOTOREDE speak before those assembled.

The reporters of the local newspapers wrote that about 600 persons attended the meeting at Wilmot School. At this point, it was impossible to know what the tempo of the meeting was going to be or how those in attendance felt about the program that was to be introduced.

The superintendent was called upon to give a report, and after giving a brief history of the subject presented a four-point recommendation for the family life program for District 110.

1. Approve the proposed CIC guide as written but introduce the human reproduction section at the 5th grade level rather than at the 3rd grade level.
2. Conduct an in-service training program for faculty members who would teach the sex education courses. The Illinois Social Hygiene League would provide the training.
3. Have a District-wide mailing to parents explaining the law whereby a child might be excluded and also allow parents to view the material.
4. Develop a parent education program to be conducted by the Association of Family Living or a comparable group.

The vote was called for, and the Board members unanimously approved the Superintendent's recommendations. According to a report in the Deerfield Review concerning this meeting, "Approximately five hundred people gave a standing ovation as Board members unanimously voted to approve the family life program."

The Board of Education had won the big battle, but the scrimmages continued. MOTOREDE told a newspaper reporter after the meeting that they would continue their anti-sex education program and would hold "coffees" to give a thorough presentation on the subject to citizens in the community. Almost immediately, it was understood that MOTOREDE would be back for another attempt.

The following April, three Board seats were to be filled through an election. Two incumbents and a third candidate were selected by the Caucus Committee to run for the board of education election. Three other allegedly independent candidates calling themselves "Citizens for a Choice," opposed to sex education also ran. The Caucus candidates swept the election by almost a three-to-one margin, receiving approximately 1,150 votes to approximately 400 voted for the "Citizens for a Choice" candidates.

#### EPILOG

Since September of 1970 a program of Health and Sex Education has become a part of the curriculum in School District 110. Some modifications and changes have occurred since the

initial study began, but in general the program has been kept intact. It is also of interest to note that only eight parents requested their children not receive instruction in sex education. The second full year of the program has caused little concern or questions from the community. The principal parties involved in the attacks on the schools have either moved from the community or are waiting patiently for another opportunity to extend their influence.

Probably the best effort made by the administration and Board of Education in this conflict was constructively to inform the community of its program. They also, accepted criticism as a means of furthering the need for community involvement on the issues presented.

It should also be noted that the strategies employed by the administration and board of education in their confrontation with the pressure group never lost sight of the importance to communicate with those parties.

The conclusions presented in this dissertation are in agreement with the procedures utilized by this school district in their attempt to counteract the pressure group attack.

A comparison of the case study methods as related to the reactions in the interview instrument are offered as a means of identifying the similarities that exist between the groups.

The following chart indicates the relationship between the case study group (Superintendent and Board of Education

members) and the reactions of the respondents in the study where it is appropriate.

### COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF SUPERINTENDENTS AND CASE STUDY GROUP

Hypotheses and Propositions		Superintendents		Case Study Group	
		Accept	Reject	Accept	Reject
Hypothesis I					
Proposition	1	x		x	
	3	x		x	
	21		x		x
	25		x		x
Hypothesis II					
Proposition	4	*N/A		N/A	
	6	N/A		N/A	
	16	x		x	
	27	N/A		N/A	
Hypothesis III					
Proposition	5	N/A		N/A	
	9	N/A		N/A	
	22	N/A		N/A	
	23	N/A		N/A	
	24	N/A		N/A	
Hypothesis IV					
Proposition	7		x		x
	13	x		x	
	20	x		x	
	26	N/A		N/A	
	31		x		x
Hypothesis V					
Proposition	10	x		x	
	14	x		x	
	17	N/A		N/A	
	28	N/A		N/A	

COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF SUPERINTENDENTS AND CASE STUDY GROUP

Hypotheses and Propositions		<u>Superintendents</u>		<u>Case Study Group</u>	
		Accept	Reject	Accept	Reject
Hypothesis VI Proposition	8	x		x	
	11	N/A		N/A	
	12	x			x
	15	N/A		N/A	
	29	x		x	
Hypothesis VII Proposition	2		x	x	
	18	x		x	
	19	x		x	
	30	x		x	

\* N/A: Not applicable

The information gleaned from the data reveal that there was agreement between the groups on all the propositions except two and twelve.

Proposition 2

School board policy should be used to control the activities of community pressure groups.

The case study was acceptable to using board policy as a means of restricting the activities of pressure groups; conversely, the superintendent's group was not agreeable to this strategy.

Proposition 12

Superintendents should participate in community pressure group activities by means of attendance and as a guest speaker.

The superintendents accepted the above proposition while the case study group rejected any form of involvement indicated in the above proposition.

The case study group was involved in a confrontation; therefore, their attitude toward the propositions cited was a judicious position of strategy on their behalf. However, in a non-crisis situation, a change in this position is warranted by school groups.

Summary and Analysis of Case Study

The life of the school administrator is necessarily one of attempting to resolve and live with public conflict. This conflict is not always a bad position to be placed in. A leadership style which can define the school's programs and work with local groups to achieve these programs is necessary. A successful superintendent must have the capacity to live with conflicts which will be generated by this process.

It is paramount that ways be sought to establish and allow channels of legitimate dissent by community pressure groups. Further, to elicit the concerns of dissatisfied individuals and groups is a strategy which can lead to their support of the schools. Even though this rationale may cause



uncomfortable situations for school administration, its potential productivity is well worth the risks involved.

As increasing attention is focused on the schools, increasing dissatisfaction can follow. Schools may be considered the institutions by which future changes will be made in our country. If this is the case, controversy must be expected as part of this process of change.

The objective of this chapter was to illustrate that there are many groups which have interests in school affairs and that these interests and the means to pursue them vary. As a natural reaction, educational matters are becoming increasingly controversial in many communities. Decisions on school affairs which used to be routine have become matters for debate. There often are many viewpoints expressed in these debates and in some cases these lead to a polarization of the community. It is imperative that school boards and administrators be continually cognizant of the effects that these issues may have on school operations. The case study reported here is an example of the efforts of one school district to involve the community democratically in this process.

## CHAPTER V

### CONCLUSIONS, RECOMMENDATIONS, AND IMPLICATIONS FOR FURTHER STUDY

A critical factor which has been discussed throughout this study is the superintendent's leadership role in dealing with community pressure groups. There is growing evidence that school administrators are working toward more involvement of community groups in school affairs. School boards and their chief executive officer can no longer hope to unilaterally make decisions which affect the community. The decision-making process calls for greater participation of community members as a necessary procedure if continued support is expected for the educational program. A normal process toward this goal would be participation by means of advisory committees, ad-Hoc committees to support tax and bond issues, more community use of school facilities, public relations programs geared to elicit community attitudes, and the involvement of lay-citizens on committees to screen applicants for positions in the schools. This list is only suggestive of some activities already found being practiced in many school districts. Further, the list should not be interpreted as encompassing the only activities which will be successful. The only limitation will be those placed by the

value structure of the community and the leadership that must come from the superintendent in these matters.

Superintendents are becoming more accepting of community involvement in the schools. Even in areas where there was resistance such as evaluation of programs, and personnel hiring practices, some superintendents and boards of education are allowing for more community participation.

The increasing negative taxpayer attitude toward the schools is an important variable found in the study. More and more school people are finding a "non-supportive" attitude amongst their taxpayers which is causing curtailment of many needed educational programs. This situation has facilitated a more compromising view being taken by some superintendents on meeting pressure group demands. It is important for school officials to use discretion in not allowing this viewpoint to negate programs vital for the maintenance of sound education.

It is imperative that superintendents continue to exert a leadership role in the selection of their staffs. Quality education is predicated on the quality of teachers employed in a school. Even though superintendents should give considerations to the advice and opinion of their community residents, it is urged that decisions in these matters be made at the board of education level.

Consideration must also be given to building an atmosphere of confidence and trust between the schools and their

publics. School districts reporting activities and attitudes geared to this purpose found more positive support of their programs and needs. There is, then, a need for superintendents to accelerate strengthening of their interaction skills and group dynamics methods for this purpose. A positive self-image is of considerable importance in the leadership characteristics of the superintendent if he expects to influence the power people in the community toward a supportive attitude.

Being sensitized to the power influentials in the community can be of immeasurable benefit to school administrators in perceiving potential conflicts that may occur on school-centered issues. Awareness of the power structure opinion on educational matters is a necessary variable for school boards and superintendents to consider before decisions are consummated.

As communities increase their participation in the affairs of the schools it will foster a need for school administrators to take a more compromising attitude on the role that the superintendency may take. It is suggested that this attitude may be the vital link needed before any agreeable benefits can be derived from community participation.

There is general agreement, from the data reported in this study, that superintendents are encouraging more of a community partnership approach in school matters. Superintendents and their staffs should be commended for this approach and their boards of education should continue to support further

development of these attempts. School administrators giving low priority to developing strategies on community involvement may well find themselves generating undue difficulties from community pressure groups.

The development of well defined public relations programs can give valuable assistance in communicating the programs of the schools as well as eliciting the communities' opinions about the educational product. In this study school districts found to be giving a high-priority to public relations activities had greater support for their programs. Significant evidence was available in the literature which supports the above point.

Finally, boards of education should be encouraged to develop written policy which can serve to assist in allowing an orderly process of the educational program. The democratic approach calls for superintendents not to influence board members on policy which may become restrictive to community participation in their schools.

### Hypothesis I

The superintendent is influenced positively by community pressure groups in the development and implementation of the instructional program.

This hypothesis was not accepted. The superintendent is viewing his role as that of a coordinator and facilitator of change. School administrators are still cautious in the involvement of community groups in the instructional program.

### Hypothesis II

The superintendent's perception of organized community pressure groups is a positive influence on his financial administration of the school district.

This hypothesis was accepted. Educators are finding a greater need to involve community groups in these matters, as a means of generating financial support for the schools. Evidence in this study shows accelerated involvement of citizens' groups in tax and bond issue proposals by boards of education.

### Hypothesis III

The superintendent is influenced positively by community pressure groups in the development and implementation of personnel policies in the school district.

This hypothesis was not accepted. The superintendent views direct involvement of community pressure groups in personnel practices as inappropriate and an unrealistic use of these groups. The responsibility for staff education and evaluation should rest with the professional staff and the Board of Education.

### Hypothesis IV

The superintendent will perceive organized community pressure groups as having a positive influence on the rate and direction of change in the entire operation of the school district.

This hypothesis was accepted. School officials are looking to the community for opinions and attitudes about the schools. The decision-making process by boards of education is

reflecting a movement toward meeting the requests of special interest groups.

#### Hypothesis V

The superintendent perceives organized pressure groups to be of positive influence on his leadership role.

This hypothesis was accepted. Educators are finding a greater need to convince the community to follow their leadership. The superintendent is further aware that his leadership style is an important variable to eliciting support from community pressure groups.

#### Hypothesis VI

The superintendent's participative attitude allows for positive action of community pressure groups.

This hypothesis was accepted. The superintendent is aware of community relations programs as essential if community support is expected for the schools. Participation in community activities is a viable means by which the superintendent can express an interest in the community.

#### Hypothesis VII

The superintendent's leadership effectiveness is positively influenced by his adherence to basic school board policies in his interaction with organized community pressure groups.

This hypothesis was accepted. The superintendent understands the importance of written policy as a necessity for

the orderly operation of the schools. Also, the process of communication can be enhanced and direction clarified for all groups having an interest in school matters and procedures.

Recommendations generated from this study:

1. School Boards should develop written policy which allows legitimate interaction of all community groups on school affairs.
2. School organizations should attempt to give community groups a greater share in advising the school staff on educational affairs.
3. Superintendents must strengthen their interpersonal skills to effectively operate with certain community pressure groups. It is recommended that Graduate Schools of Education consider offering additional courses dealing with group dynamics, group psychology, and leadership style.
4. Superintendents should encourage the establishment, by their boards of education, of public relations programs. The continuation of these programs should be under the direction of a professional staff member.
5. Superintendents should consider the involvement of community groups in educational matters other than tax and bond issue support. Several promising activities of educational value were reported in Chapter III.

#### Implications for Further Study

The belief in the efficacy of education as a means of meeting the social, emotional, and economic problems still persists but the public's confidence in schools has declined in this past decade. This basic belief in education means that people will still support schools. It also means that, when those schools do not appear to be operating in the best



interests of the community, people will intervene and attempt to change their operation, or even take over the schools. Usually, citizen influence on the schools is a sign of concern rather than a lack of faith in the schools.

The momentum of mobility of population, changing community values and attitudes along with the present political and technological changes has placed the superintendent in a position of crucial leadership. The leadership role of the superintendent is being challenged on all fronts. The superintendent must ask himself the question of how should he react as the chief executive officer of the schools, when confronted with issues, demands, and special considerations of community pressure groups. Should he be indifferent to the demands of these groups or should he attempt to understand their particular needs and interests?

Because school administrators understand the need for continual analysis of their leadership role in resolving these problems, the following implications are cited for further study:

1. What types of leadership style are found to be more effective in dealing with community pressure groups?
2. What effects do community pressure groups have on the middle management people of the schools?
3. Which aspects of the school program cause significant community pressure group activity?
4. Should superintendents relinquish some of the control on budget and curriculum matters to community groups?

5. What role should parents and special interest groups have in the evaluation of teaching?
6. Should research be conducted to determine what types of public relations activities are found to generate support for the schools?
7. To what extent should citizens and community pressure groups participate in the policy decision-making process?
8. What position should boards of education members take in the involvement of community pressure groups in school affairs?
9. Should school districts participate with other governmental agencies in communicating long term goals and plans of the schools? There is a need for the governmental agencies of the community to coordinate their needs if for no other reason than to decrease some possible additional costs to the taxpayer.

An educational leader should lead. It is he who should be recommending differentiated staffing, personalized instruction, more extensive use of media, rather than waiting for pressures to build from the community. He is charged with the responsibility of leading his board, his staff, and his community to efficiently find and develop the best possible educational program within the limits of the financial resources of the community. The superintendent must have the leadership drive to coordinate successfully the efforts of all community groups to reach the ultimate goal, the best education possible for the youth of the community. The foundation of this mission is laid from the understanding and perception of the many variables of the community.

In summary, it is postulated that the schools should serve the needs of the public. In many cases, however, the public is poorly prepared to cope with the extent and nature of public education without some guidance and direction of the school's professionals. The leadership role of today's superintendency dictates that it educate the public to the reason for decisions and the alternatives available. Thus, the professional should be able to point out the implications of these decisions and their influence on the educational product. Increasing public demand for accountability of the schools foster an increasing responsible participation from these same advocates in educational decisions of the community.

## APPENDIX A

### QUESTIONNAIRE: SUPERINTENDENT SURVEY

- \_\_\_ 1. Newspapers
- \_\_\_ 2. Service Clubs (e.g. Rotary)
- \_\_\_ 3. John Birch Society
- \_\_\_ 4. American Legion
- \_\_\_ 5. Daughters of the American Revolution
- \_\_\_ 6. Federal Government
- \_\_\_ 7. Black Panthers
- \_\_\_ 8. P.T.A. or P.T.O.
- \_\_\_ 9. Village Government
- \_\_\_ 10. Park District
- \_\_\_ 11. Community Traditions
- \_\_\_ 12. Current Recession
- \_\_\_ 13. Teacher Supply
- \_\_\_ 14. Teacher Militancy (strike, unions, etc.)
- \_\_\_ 15. Student Activism
- \_\_\_ 16. Recent Law Cases
- \_\_\_ 17. Voucher System
- \_\_\_ 18. Accountability
- \_\_\_ 19. Merit Pay for Administrators
- \_\_\_ 20. Merit Pay for Teachers
- \_\_\_ 21. Human Relations Programs
- \_\_\_ 22. Year Around School
- \_\_\_ 23. Little League
- \_\_\_ 24. Local Zoning Laws
- \_\_\_ 25. School Board Members
- \_\_\_ 26. Superintendent and Principal Relationships
- \_\_\_ 27. Business Interests (local merchants)
- \_\_\_ 28. New Curriculum Programs and Strategies
- \_\_\_ 29. Academic Freedom (students)
- \_\_\_ 30. Academic Freedom (teachers)
- \_\_\_ 31. Research (current literature)
- \_\_\_ 32. Chamber of Commerce
- \_\_\_ 33. Police Department
- \_\_\_ 34. State Government
- \_\_\_ 35. Civil Liberties Union
- \_\_\_ 36. Urban League
- \_\_\_ 37. Local Religious Groups
- \_\_\_ 38. Human Relations Groups
- \_\_\_ 39. Private Schools (within immediate community)
- \_\_\_ 40. Local Library

- \_\_\_ 41. Professional Groups (A.M.A., Illinois Bar Association)
- \_\_\_ 42. Youth Organizations (Boy Scouts)
- \_\_\_ 43. Community Chest Services
- \_\_\_ 44. Public Health Clinics
- \_\_\_ 45. Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction, State  
of Illinois
- \_\_\_ 46. Senior Citizens' Groups
- \_\_\_ 47. Special Education Programs
- \_\_\_ 48. Department of Public Aid (Welfare)
- \_\_\_ 49. Wage and Price Freeze
- \_\_\_ 50. Other Public School District in area
- \_\_\_ 51. Homeowner's Associations
- \_\_\_ 52. Political Groups
- \_\_\_ 53. Band Parents Associations
- \_\_\_ 54. Athletic Progress of the Schools
- \_\_\_ 55. Adult Athletic Clubs (Support In-School Programs)
- \_\_\_ 56. In-Service Activities
- \_\_\_ 57. Citizens Advisory Committee
- \_\_\_ 58. N.A.A.C.P.
- \_\_\_ 59. Other (please comment)

## APPENDIX B

### DIRECTIONS

#### SUPERINTENDENTS' QUESTIONNAIRE

Your responses to the propositions will be categorized using a modified Likert scale. Please express your reactions according to personal feelings in one of the five following degrees: Strongly agree (SA), Agree (A), Undecided (U), Disagree (D), and Strongly Disagree (SD). In scoring the scale your responses will be weighted +2 (SA), +1 (A), 0 (U), -1 (D), and -2 (SD), respectively. If you strongly agree to a proposition, that proposition would receive +2 points. If you strongly disagree to a proposition, that proposition would receive -2 points. As the numbers increase positively, so does your agreement with the proposition. As the numbers increase negatively, so does your disagreement with the proposition.

PROCEDURE

Please circle only one of the five alternatives from SA to SD which best describes your perception and feelings toward the questions as stated. Your verbal comments to support or clarify any reactions you may have to the issues are encouraged during the interview.

Anonymity will be preserved in analyzing and reporting the data within the dissertation. Results of the study will be made available to superintendents participating in the research upon request.

1. Superintendents would feel more secure in their positions if they were aware of the community power structure.

SA    A    U    D    SD

2. School board policy should be used to control the activities of community pressure groups.

SA    A    U    D    SD

3. Superintendents should include community pressure groups in an advisory capacity when contemplating curriculum change.

SA    A    U    D    SD

4. Superintendents should actively seek support of community pressure groups in the passage of tax and bond issues.

SA    A    U    D    SD

5. Superintendents should seek candidates for teaching vacancies from community pressure groups.

SA    A    U    D    SD

6. Superintendents should elicit the support and advice of community pressure groups in the formulation of the school district budget.

SA    A    U    D    SD

7. The power of the Superintendents will diminish if they allow community pressure groups to become involved in school matters.

SA    A    U    D    SD

8. The Superintendent can best control and utilize community pressure groups through allowing their participation in school affairs.  
SA    A    U    D    SD
9. The Superintendent's personnel hiring practices should reflect the desires of the community pressure groups.  
SA    A    U    D    SD
10. Superintendents should have an "Open Door" policy in dealing with community pressure groups.  
SA    A    U    D    SD
11. Superintendents should include lay citizens as committee members when programs of curriculum innovations are being planned.  
SA    A    U    D    SD
12. Superintendents should participate in community pressure group activities by means of attendance at meetings and as a guest speaker.  
SA    A    U    D    SD
13. The Superintendent's leadership role will be directly related to his ability to control the influence of community pressure groups on the schools.  
SA    A    U    D    SD
14. Community pressure groups should be given scheduled time at Board of Education meetings to discuss issues related to the schools.  
SA    A    U    D    SD
15. Superintendents should have the authority to decide which community pressure groups can best serve the schools, and then to support their activities accordingly.  
SA    A    U    D    SD
16. Boards of education must negotiate with community pressure groups.  
SA    A    U    D    SD



17. Superintendent's job security is directly related to his ability to deal effectively with community pressure group activities.  
SA    A    U    D    SD
18. Superintendents should encourage boards of education to establish written policy in dealing with community pressure groups.  
SA    A    U    D    SD
19. All community pressure groups should be made aware of board of education policies by the Superintendent.  
SA    A    U    D    SD
20. Boards of education should devote time at their regular meetings to interact with community pressure groups.  
SA    A    U    D    SD
21. Superintendents should seek the advice and counsel of community pressure groups in the evaluation of the instructional program.  
SA    A    U    D    SD
22. Superintendents should involve lay citizens groups in the selection of all administrative staff.  
SA    A    U    D    SD
23. Superintendents should involve lay citizen groups in the selection of teachers.  
SA    A    U    D    SD
24. Superintendents should involve lay citizen groups in the selection of non-certified school district employees.  
SA    A    U    D    SD
25. A course of study in a controversial area should not be offered if special interest groups do not favor its implementation in the schools.  
SA    A    U    D    SD

26. Superintendents should not join or participate in community organizations which may influence the schools.
- SA A U D SD
27. Superintendents should pay attention to budget matters which reflect the interests of community pressure groups.
- SA A U D SD
28. Superintendents should involve community pressure groups in a constructive manner in all aspects of the school programs.
- SA A U D SD
29. Superintendents should devote a considerable portion of their time to school-community relations.
- SA A U D SD
30. The board of education should adopt policies which will restrict community pressure group activity within the schools.
- SA A U D SD
31. Involvement of community pressure groups in school affairs will cause morale problems with teachers.
- SA A U D SD

## APPENDIX C

### PROMINENT EDUCATORS

Robert S. Cahill, Professor of Political Science, University of Hawaii.

Roald T. Campbell, Professor of Education, Ohio State University.

Luvern L. Cunningham, Professor of Education, Ohio State University.

Samuel J. Eldersveld, Professor, University of Pittsburgh.

Thomas H. Eliot, Professor of Political Science, Washington University, St. Louis, Mo.

Glen G. Eye, Professor of Education, University of Wisconsin.

Theodore W. Foat, Executive Secretary, New England Development Council.

Grace Graham, Professor of Education, University of Oregon.

Robert L. Granger, Dean of Education, Neward State College, New Jersey.

Daniel E. Griffiths, Professor of Education, University of Chicago.

Stephen P. Hencley, Professor of Education, University of Illinois.

M. P. Heller, Professor, Chairman of Department of Administration and Supervision, Loyola University.

Floyd Hunter, Professor, University of North Carolina.

H. Thomas James, Dean of the School of Education, Stanford University.

Roe L. Johns, Head of Department of Educational Administration, University of Florida.

Ralph B. Kimbrough, Professor of Education, University of Florida.

Michael W. Kirst, Professor of Political Science, Stanford University.

Donald J. McCarty, Professor of Education, Cornell University.

Lloyd E. McCleary, Professor of Education, University of Utah.

Edgar L. Morphet, Professor of Education, University of California, Berkeley.

Lanore A. Netzer, Professor of Education, University of Wisconsin.

Charles E. Ramsey, Professor of Education, Cornell University.

Theodore L. Reller, Professor of Education, University of California, Berkeley.

Peter Rossi, Professor, Michigan State University.

Robert T. Stout, Professor of Education and Sociology, Claremont Graduate School.

J. Lloyd Trump, Executive Secretary of National Association of Secondary School Principals.

## APPENDIX D

Questions asked during the interview to elicit clarification and rationale of respondents' responses to questionnaire items. No set order or priority was adhered to in asking the questions.

1. In what way do you feel the superintendent's role has changed during the past few years?
2. In what phase of your job do you spend the most time?
3. What type of leadership style do you feel is most effective in dealing with the public? (Examples were given by interviewer such as: change agent, facilitator, public relations, etc.)
4. Do you feel community pressure groups have assisted you in dealing with school problems?
6. What do you think the role of the superintendent in a suburban community will be like in the next five years?
7. Do you feel pressure groups in your community have special interests which are contrary to your views?
8. What strategies have you employed in dealing with community pressure groups which have proven successful?
9. Do you feel that your board of education is aware of special interest group activities and their implications on their role as board members?
10. Have you had any attempts in the past few years by pressure groups to influence the decision-making authority of the board of education? Other school officials? (Interviewer asked for brief explanation if answers were affirmative.)
11. Do you keep your staff members aware of special interest group activities in the community?

12. Do you have a defined school-community relations program?  
(Interviewer asked for brief explanation if answer was affirmative.)

Comments obtained from this source are reported in Chapter III in conjunction with the analysis of questionnaire data.

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## APPROVAL SHEET

The dissertation submitted by Oscar Thomas Bedrosian has been read and approved by three members of the Department of Education.

The final copies have been examined by the Director of the dissertation and the signature which appears below verifies the fact that any necessary changes have been incorporated and that the dissertation is now given final approval with reference to content, form, and mechanical accuracy.

The dissertation is therefore accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Education.

April 26, 1972  
Date

  
Signature of Advisor